



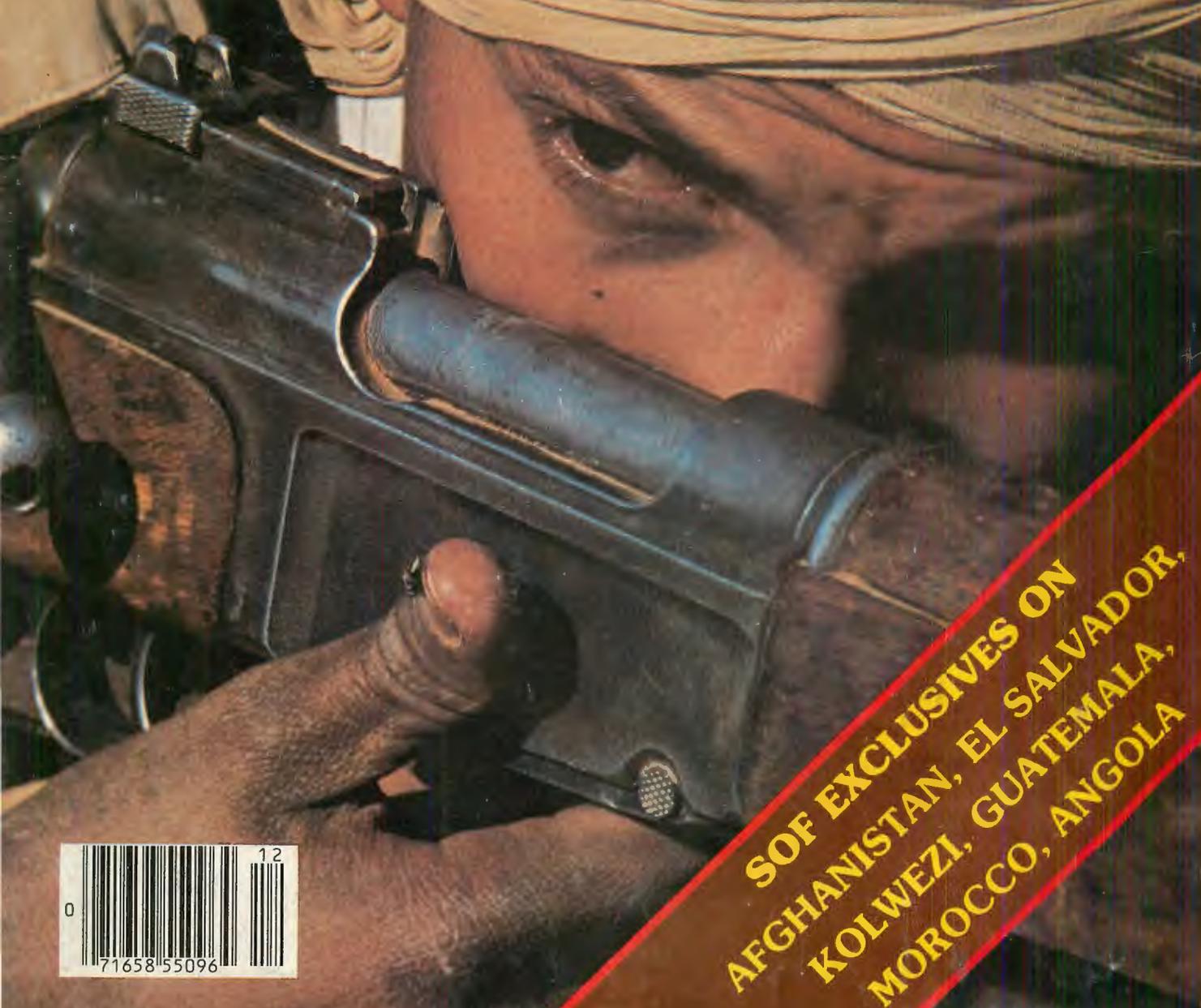
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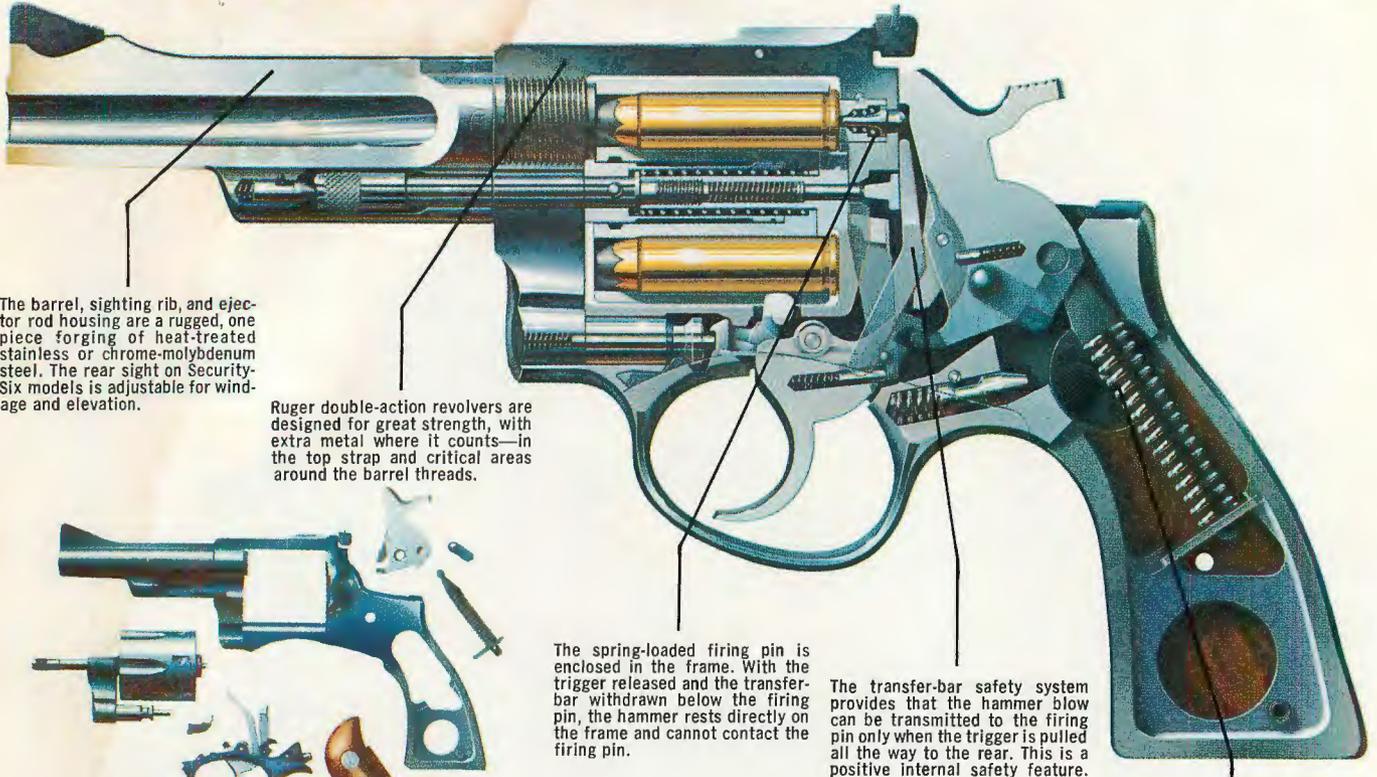
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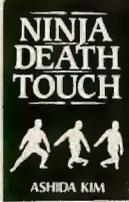
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EDITOR'S NOTE

As many *Soldier of Fortune* readers probably already know, our staff has been busy in Central America again — El Salvador and Honduras. SOF Editor/Publisher Robert K. Brown headed up a 12-man team of trainers, medics and journalists who spent three weeks in August evaluating the effectiveness of previous SOF trips and giving follow-up training to two units — the Atlacatl and Airborne Battalions.

Although SOF's earlier trips to El Salvador received little attention from the press or the guerrillas, the latest trip got the attention of both — probably as a result of SOF's 116-page "Crisis in Central America" September '83 issue.

The press treatment of SOF was fair overall — although they still have trouble differentiating between soldiers of fortune and mercenaries. And the guerrillas' reaction was predictable: veiled threats delivered through the media in San Salvador and some unkind remarks about SOF on *Radio Venceremos*, the voice of the Salvadoran guerrillas broadcast from Managua, Nicaragua.

Of course, not all SOF observed on the ground in El Salvador — which included two trips to Morazan Province, one of that country's two "hot" areas — was encouraging; however, in general, SOF observed that some progress had been made since its last visit.

Gen. Vides Cassanova, who took over as minister of defense in July, has adopted what is referred to in El Salvador as "The National Plan," which appears to have the Gs on the run at this time. Portions of the plan involve aggressive military operations in areas long plagued by guerrilla attack (San Vicente and Usulután Provinces), night operations, small-unit operations and development of local civil-defense forces (detailed in Bob Poos' article, "El Salvador's Civil Defenders," page 82).

In addition, Gen. Cassanova is keeping the army away from the *cuartel* (headquarters) and out in the field all over the country. This has effectively denied the Gs the opportunity to rest, regroup and resupply.

But the war is far from over. For every action taken by the government, both positive and negative factors exist. The quickened pace of the Salvadoran Army has increased the number of casualties — both guerrilla and government — and the wear and tear on equipment was evident to SOF.

The critical point in the war will come when El Salvador's Army runs out of *equipment and resources* — food, medical supplies, ammunition, firearms, spare parts and airlift capability. Because of the meager funds the U.S. Congress has allocated so far, Cassanova has had to stretch his assets beyond reasonable limits.

El Salvador's funding and supply situation is riddled with problems, but the major one is that the U.S. Congress is being unrealistically cheap. Salvadoran combat casualties have only a 50-50 chance of making it alive to a medical facility because the government lacks adequate helicopters (only 16 Hueys), trained medics and medical supplies.

So, while the Salvadoran supplies are steadily diminished, knowledgeable sources in El Salvador expect the Gs to make a major counteroffensive by the time this issue reaches the newsstand.

In the January SOF, we'll detail what we found on the ground. Don't miss it.

— Jim Graves

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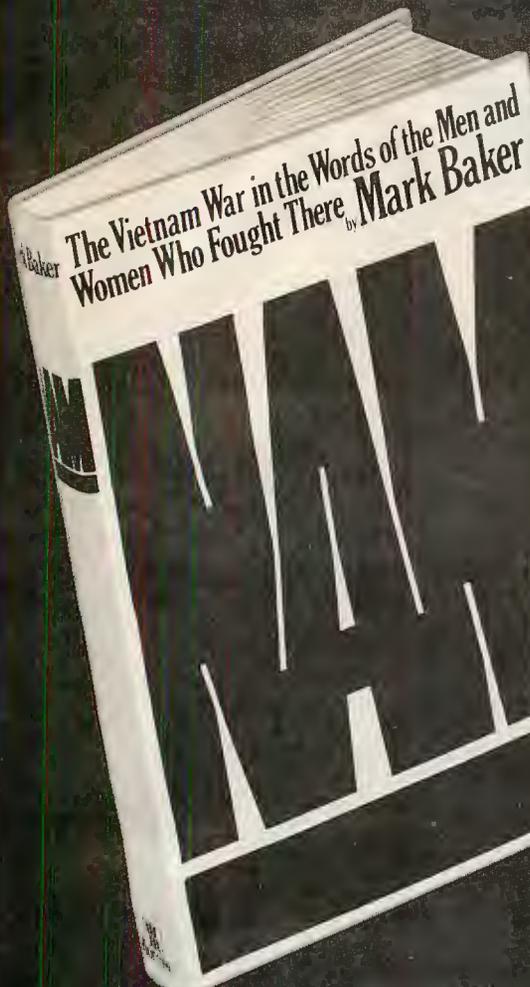
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COVER: SOF went to North Africa to look at the Moroccan-Polisario war in the Spanish Sahara and found Russian bear tracks in the sand. Here Polisario guerrilla guards camp 150 kilometers south of Tindouf on the Algerian side of the border. Photo: Adrian Wecer

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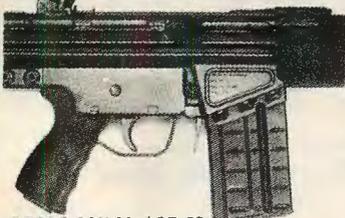


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FLAK



M1 CAME EARLY, STAYED LATE...

Sirs:

Bob Poos' sidebar, "Rifleman's Rifle," in your August '83 issue prompts me to write. Although I carried an M14 in Vietnam as an adviser to the 25th ARVN Infantry (1967-68), I have fired the M1 countless times. It is, as Poos describes it, an excellent rifle.

Poos explained the role of the M1 in conquering the Japanese, Germans, North Koreans and Chinese. I would like to point out that until the late '60s, every ARVN in Vietnam carried this rifle.

Hoey Morris
Houston, Texas

FEW WRITE VIEWS...

Sirs:

I would like to express my concern over the Central American issue and urge your readers to stand up and be heard. I think we all know the dangers at stake.

I was amazed to read in the July issue of SOF that of the thousands of letters Sen. Chris Dodd (D-Conn.) had received, only four or five supported aid to Central America. I've written to Sen. Dodd, the governor of Oregon, my senator, the House Foreign Affairs Committee, the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, the National Advisory Council, local newspapers and television stations and even the president.

I don't know what good my letters will do or if they will even be read, but I do know what will happen if nobody writes.

John Wallace, Jr.
Portland, Oregon

Sen. Dodd will read lots of support for aid to Central America if SOF readers will write to him: *The Honorable Christopher J. Dodd, U.S. Senate, Washington, DC 20510.* —The Eds.

TASMANIAN DEVILRY...

Sirs:

I am an ex-USN Vietnam vet and an avid reader of your magazine. The prob-

lem prompting this letter is that I can no longer obtain SOF. A friend of mine, an ex-police officer and current owner of a news agency, has told me he cannot get your magazine any more. He was told by his distributor that all copies of SOF have been ordered burned. I checked with other shops and agencies and found that all copies have been removed.

As a state trooper here, I've quickly come to realize there are a lot of communists in the Labor government. As you may be aware, that government has recently won a federal election in this country. I don't know whether or not this ties in with the sudden removal of SOF.

I hope you are able to check out what is going on here. I'm very annoyed with the whole ordeal, and I'd sure hate to see your magazine gone forever from our shores.

Don Burns
Tasmania, Australia

Our problem is that Australia has a censorship law. Each issue of SOF, as well as all other non-Australian magazines, is examined by a censor when it arrives. For reasons we don't know some issues are passed, others rejected. We have not yet been able to obtain from the Australian government an answer as to why some go through and some don't.

We are working on it but you and other SOF readers in Australia could help by writing to your representatives and giving your opinion on the situation. —The Eds.

WHO TO TURN TO...

Sirs:

I read with great interest the Editor's Note on the Bo Gritz controversy (see SOF, July '83). Just before that I had finished reading J.C. Pollock's *Mission MIA*. As I read the book, I couldn't help thinking of Gritz and how his efforts, to some degree, paralleled those of Callahan in the book. When I first read about Gritz, I envisioned him as some type of American hero trying to follow his conscience to rescue those we left behind. I had be-

Continued on page 9

Here's something you don't usually see in armor ads . . .

HARD FACTS

A lot of armor makers seem bent on keeping you from knowing much about their products. We don't see it that way. If you are going to stake your life on something, we think you need to know as much as possible about it. So read on.

There are nine layers of 31 x 31 count, 1,000 denier, Zepel-D[®] treated Kevlar[®] 29 in each SILENT PARTNER[®] armor insert — exactly the style and weave of Kevlar recommended in the 1977 NILECJ study that set the national standard for police armor. A lot of manufacturers cut their cost by using something less.

We have one quarrel with that study. It says the most powerful round you need to worry about on the street is the .38 Spl. 158 gr. round-nose lead projectile. Since 20 percent of all police officers killed in the line of duty are shot with their own or their partner's gun, that's not very realistic.

Here's a rogue's gallery of rounds recovered from a standard nine-layer SILENT PARTNER insert under NILECJ test standards. (A more detailed report, covering the full range of rounds tested, comes with your armor.)

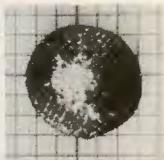
Rem. 230 gr. .45 ACP FMC
Velocity: 836 FPS
No armor layers penetrated



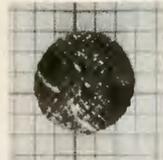
Rem. 250 gr. .45 Long Colt LRN
Velocity: 770 FPS
No layers penetrated



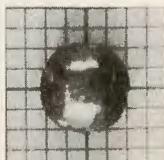
Rem. 210 gr. .41 Magnum LSWC
Velocity: 994 FPS
No layers penetrated



Rem. 158 gr. .357 Magnum
Velocity: 1,151 FPS
One layer penetrated



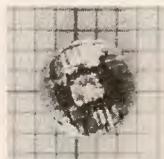
Fed. 123 gr. 9mm Para. FMC
Velocity: 1,069 FPS
Three layers penetrated



CCI 125 gr. 9mm Para. JHP
Velocity: 1121 FPS
No layers penetrated



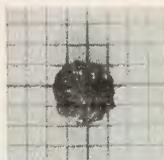
W/W 115 gr. 9mm Para. Silvertip
Velocity: 1,190 FPS
No layers penetrated



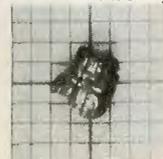
S&W 125 gr. .38 Spl. Nyklad
Velocity: 1,001 FPS
No layers penetrated



W/W 40 gr. .22 Magnum JHP
Velocity: 1,210 FPS
Two layers penetrated



CCI 32 gr. .22 LR Stinger
Velocity: 1,283 FPS
Two layers penetrated



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SURVIVE'S

A woman wearing a red and white patterned headscarf and a white floral blouse is seated and spinning yarn on a traditional wooden loom. She is looking down at her work. The background shows a rustic, stone-walled structure.

**DECEMBER ISSUE
PROVIDES INSIGHT TO**

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- The Ideal Survival Gun
- Planning Your Food Supply
- EMP: The Neglected Danger

**DON'T MISS THE EXCITING
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FLAK



Continued from page 6

lieved this mission failed because of governmental bureaucracy.

Your editorial paints a much different picture and is probably the most objective when compared to what I read and thought to have been Gritz's motivation. I am shocked to think he would undertake a mission and carry along television producers, photographers, hypnotists, etc. To read that on this mission his primary ordnance consisted of four semi-auto UZIs and a pistol is sheer insanity.

I was disappointed, after reading your editorial, in myself for being so damn gullible. At one time, I planned to donate to his cause financially and, if acceptable to Gritz, would have considered other methods of support. Obviously there were other Americans similarly impressed.

There must be someone who is trying to find the truth about MIAs in Southeast Asia. If there is something I can do to help in this effort, please let me know.

Anthony Zumpetta
Huntingdon, Pennsylvania

There is one organization making a respectable and responsible effort to discover the fate of the missing. If you wish to help, contact Chuck Allen at the Center for POW/MIA Accountability, 910 16th Street NW, Suite 303, Washington, DC 20006. The board of directors of the Center for POW/MIA Accountability is composed primarily of highly respected former military men like Allen (a retired lieutenant colonel and former commander of Project Delta) and Jack Singlaub (a retired major general and former commander of MACVSOG).

CHARLIE BLACK REMEMBERED...

Sirs:

Reading your April '83 issue, I learned, with regret, of the death of Charlie Black. I have read articles of his and was fortunate enough to have met him twice. The first time was at Ft. Benning while the Cav was preparing for movement. To a young, impressionable Airborne Rifle Platoon Leader, he was a shocking sight to see, climbing down a cargo net tower. His fatigues were a mass of wrinkles and he had not shaved in three days. My first thought was, "Is this a soldier? No, he's a civilian." The second and last time we met was at an airstrip near Pleiku. He was just back from an operation (wearing the same wrinkled uniform and still needing a shave) and was walking past my CP en route to a slick that would take him to

another operation (the Cav had a tendency to stay employed). He called me by name, even though I was wearing a T-shirt (no name tag) and we had met only once before. Again shocked, I thought, "Is this a civilian? No, he's a soldier."

If only we had had more Charlie Blacks, then the accuracy of the journalism to come out of Vietnam would have been much higher. There were good journalists who responsibly reported our war and some of them lost their lives doing it, but other irresponsible media members gave aid and comfort to the North Vietnamese and this was a major addition to their combat power. A battle was fought daily in the United States, and won by the media on behalf of the North Vietnamese. The miserable slime who covered the war from a barstool in Saigon should now be exiled back (and take the actress with them). The horror and misery that are now the lot of the people of South Vietnam should appropriately be reported on by those who helped create it. I am sure Charlie Black was no stranger to a barstool, but his reporting came from the jungle.

Jack Peevy
Miami, Florida

GURKHAS COMMAND RESPECT...

Sirs:

I really enjoyed your article about Britain's Gurkhas in your February '83 issue, as I feel that too little is known or written about them in this country.

While I was stationed in Seoul, Korea, from 1973 to 1974, I had the pleasure of meeting and knowing several Gurkhas from the 7th Duke of Edinburgh's Own Gurkha Rifles, or the "7GR," as my Gurkha friends called themselves. I learned to know and respect those fine soldiers as friends, and so I feel they and their fellow Gurkhas richly deserve all praise for their soldierly qualities.

I was interested to learn this spring that several hundred Gurkhas of the 7th GR landed at the Falklands with the British forces, and their mere presence so shook the Argies that Galtieri's government complained to the Nepalese government to get them out. The fear of the *kukri* at one's throat really works wonders, doesn't it? I wonder if any of my old 7GR friends were there.

Robert T. Donald
Nampa, Idaho

WAR STORY PERFECTED...

Sirs:

"Learn to Talk Merc" (SOF May '83) is a great article. I hope we see more of John W.I. Ball in SOF.

One correction: A war story *always* starts out with "This is no shit," before "There I was."

Dick Izold
Anchorage, Alaska

Continued on page 138



FIGHT FOR FREEDOM

Afghanistan is very far away, and the mujahideen don't speak our language, but what they are fighting for speaks to each of us: the right to worship God as they think best, the right to run their own country, the right not to be butchered and shoved around by a foreign invader. They call it a holy war, and they need your help. They're not afraid to die, but without weapons and ammunition *courage* is not enough. Due to hassles with Pakistani customs, we can't send supplies and equipment, but we can send money. Your *donation* is NOT tax-deductible, but you do get a handsome certificate signed by Editor/Publisher Robert K. Brown AND the knowledge that you did your bit. Make your check payable to Afghan Freedom Fighters Fund and send it to:

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COMBAT WEAPONCRAFT



Magazine Management & Rifle Reports

by Ken Hackathorn

MILITARY rifles are always compromises. They are made for a shooter of an average size with an action borrowed from any number of older weapons and furniture and controls designed by committee. If you have a modern military rifle it is probably not exactly right for you. But it doesn't have to stay that way. Mixed in with the junk you see at every gun show there are a few things that really work.

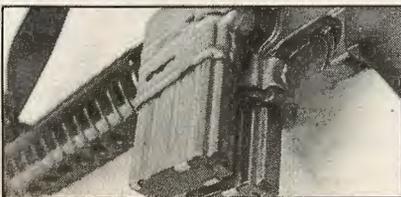
I've got big hands and even I have trouble reaching the controls on my HK91 and '93 rifles. I don't know what people with stubby fingers do. Other than that the '91 is about my favorite rifle to shoot in 7.62mm NATO. I'm not going to chuck it just because the magazine release is a little slow.

At one time I figured I was going to have to live with the inconvenience, but the Cherokee Magazine Release has changed all that. The civilian versions of the HK91 and HK93 have an almost-out-of-reach button. The G3, on the other hand, has an efficient flapper-type release. It allows you to free the magazine at the same time you grab it for a change, and hit the release with the gripping hand. The advantages are obvious; I don't know why Heckler & Koch doesn't use the system on the '91.

Like I said: We don't have to live with that anymore. Cherokee Gun Accessories (Dept. SOF, 830 Woodside Rd., Redwood City, CA 94061) makes and markets a release conversion kit that costs \$49.95. Installation is clean and simple. The only thing I don't like about



Rep demonstrates the Cherokee Magazine Release for author.



Redi-Mag is just what it says, and this spare box is ready.

the Cherokee Magazine Release is its length. It's just long enough to get in my way when I try to grab the magazine high up for a firm hold. Fortunately, shortening the lever is something anyone can do, and refinishing the end is only desirable, not necessary.

Now if they would just do something about the right-hand-only safety/selector lever.

I wish the U.S. armed forces were issuing something other than the M16. But they aren't, and since it is the most prevalent military rifle in the free world, there are good accessories out for it and for its civilian counterparts. One of my favorites is the Redi-Mag.

The Redi-Mag holds a spare magazine parallel to the one in the well. When you need to change, just grab the spare, hit the button, and stick the fresh box in the well when the spent one drops. It is less clunky than taping or clamps (though a little more mechanically complicated). At \$39.95 it's a little more expensive than tape or a clamp, but it has one great attraction for me.

I can do a magazine change with a Redi-Mag in under two seconds. That's worth \$39.95. JFS, Inc. (Dept. SOF, P.O. Box 12204, Salem, OR 97309) builds and sells the Redi-Mag, and they should be in full commercial production by the time you read this. Also, by the time you read this, I shall have bought my own Redi-Mag to replace my test sample, and it'll be on my CAR-15.

In the June '83 issue of SOF I mentioned the Swedish Army's new rifle-evaluation program, and cast my own vote (which nobody paid any mind) for the Galil-copy FFV 890C. They took the FNC. This is worse news than you might think, because it means the FFV is not likely to reach this country in a semiauto version.

There is some good news for U.S. civilians, though. South Africa's Lyttelton Engineering Works, Ltd., is making a semiauto R-4. This commercial copy of SA's copy of the Galil is actually lighter than the Israeli Military Industries' version, since it's built with fiber-reinforced plastic furniture. Called the LM-4, importers are already looking at it and we can expect to see it in this country some time in the future. We can only pray that it doesn't cost as much as the other variants of the Galil. ☒

For those of you who are wondering about those numbers preceded by either FSN or NSN, these represent Federal Stock Number & NATO Stock Number, respectively. These are the numbers the Government orders from! It guarantees the Real McCoy, not a copy!

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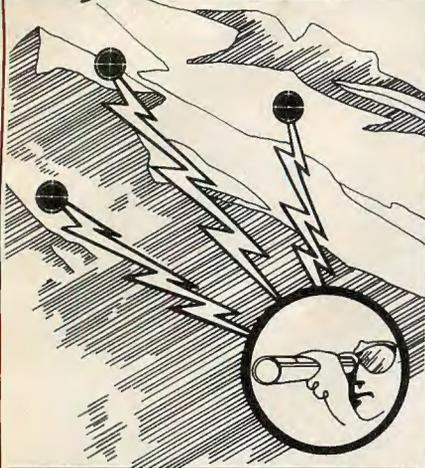
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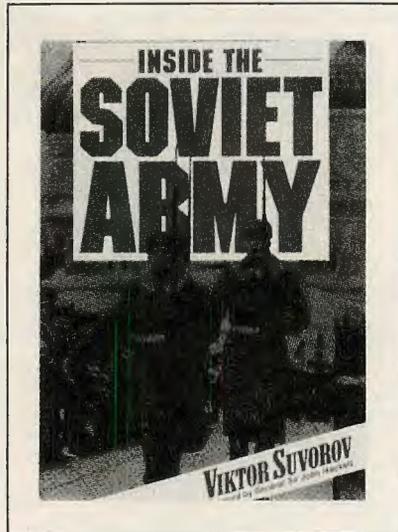
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IN REVIEW

INSIDE THE SOVIET ARMY. By Viktor Suvorov. New York: MacMillan Publishing Co. Inc. 1983. 296 pp. \$15.95. Review by David C. Isby.



Inside the Soviet Army varies between the insightful and the incredible, but is always fascinating. The author, Viktor Suvorov, is a Ukrainian who had a successful career in the Soviet Army, graduating from the Frunze Academy (equivalent to the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College at Ft. Leavenworth) and rising to the rank of lieutenant colonel before, in a manner undisclosed, he came West.

Suvorov told more than his name, rank and serial number, and in return, I trust his hosts in British intelligence have treated him to more than warm beer. The Soviets, true to form, proved poor losers. They court-martialed Suvorov *in absentia* and pronounced the usual sentence of death, which the KGB will carry out if they ever get the chance to arrange the traditional tragic accident or motiveless crime. Staying one step ahead of his former associates, Suvorov now lives in Britain and writes books, using a pen name for reasons connected with self-preservation.

This is actually Suvorov's second book. His first, *The Liberators*, was a splendid collection of stories about his experiences (and the experiences of others) during his time in the Soviet Army. Strangely, there is no U.S. edition of this book, but anyone who can acquire a copy of the British edition is advised to do so.

In both books, the stories Suvorov tells ring true. Not only students of the Soviet Army, but anyone who has ever served in any army, anywhere, will recognize the way things are. The Soviet Army Suvorov served in was chock-full of drunkards, uncaring officers, apathetic conscripts, toadying staff officers, KGB informers, mindless bureaucrats and so on. It could

also be tremendously brutal (Suvorov and his unit got to watch a military execution in 1968). It is also, in the final analysis, the only thing in Soviet society that works. And, for all its faults, it does work.

When Suvorov writes about something from personal experience, he does it well. I can confirm much of his information from my research and from the accounts of other ex-Soviet soldiers. Suvorov had the advantage of actually being interested in military affairs — unlike many Soviet (or U.S.) officers. When he writes about things other people in the Soviet military told him, or things he found out second-hand, his information is somewhat shaky. Overall, on the standard NATO reliability scale, I could not give Suvorov a grade above a "B."

The problem with *The Liberators* is also shared with *Inside the Soviet Army*. Part of the problem is that Suvorov writes well, with a dry, satiric wit that seems to belie his self-proclaimed origins as a Ukrainian farm boy. I suspect that, since he is in no position to go back and check his sources and he is writing from memory, he is not about to leave out a good story simply because it might not be true. So even the questionable parts make for entertaining reading.

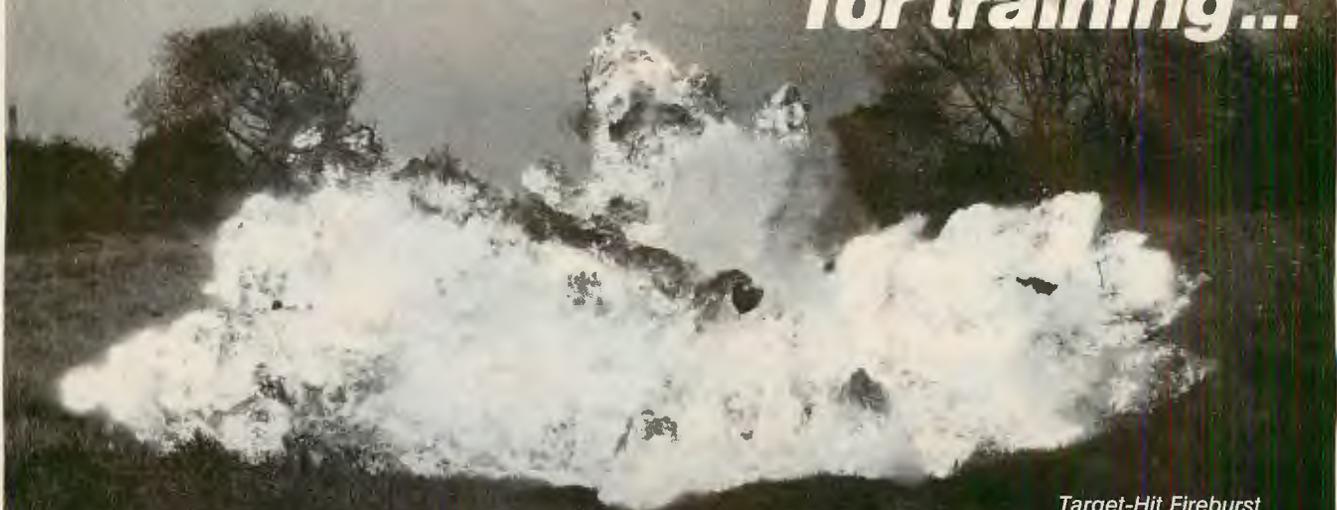
Some of *Inside the Soviet Army* does not read like this at all. It reads as if Suvorov had transcribed his lecture notes from the Frunze Academy or reconstructed them from memory. These are some of the most useful things in the book, for this is what the Soviets thought up-and-coming majors should learn.

Knowledge is power and, in the Soviet Union, power is a monopoly of the State. Therefore, the Soviets tell their people as little as possible. So when Suvorov starts talking about the escape routes from the Kremlin, the strategic rocket forces or the Navy, one must accept this information with caution.

He tells some interesting stories about Soviet Army equipment. He describes the Soviet practice of not letting some weapons crews even see their wartime equipment in peacetime — they train on similar, less-advanced weapons. Some of these "mystery weapons" are hardly revolutionary — they include 125mm and 130mm self-propelled antitank and assault guns. Others include missile-firing tanks which Suvorov calls the IT-1 and other sources call the T-64B, similar to the Shil-lagh antitank guided missile fired from the 152mm gun tubes of U.S. M60A2 tanks. The *Vasilek* 82mm self-propelled mortar is now in action in Afghanistan, but is still so secret that not only will the Soviets not publish photographs of it or describe its tactical use, they will not even

Continued on page 136

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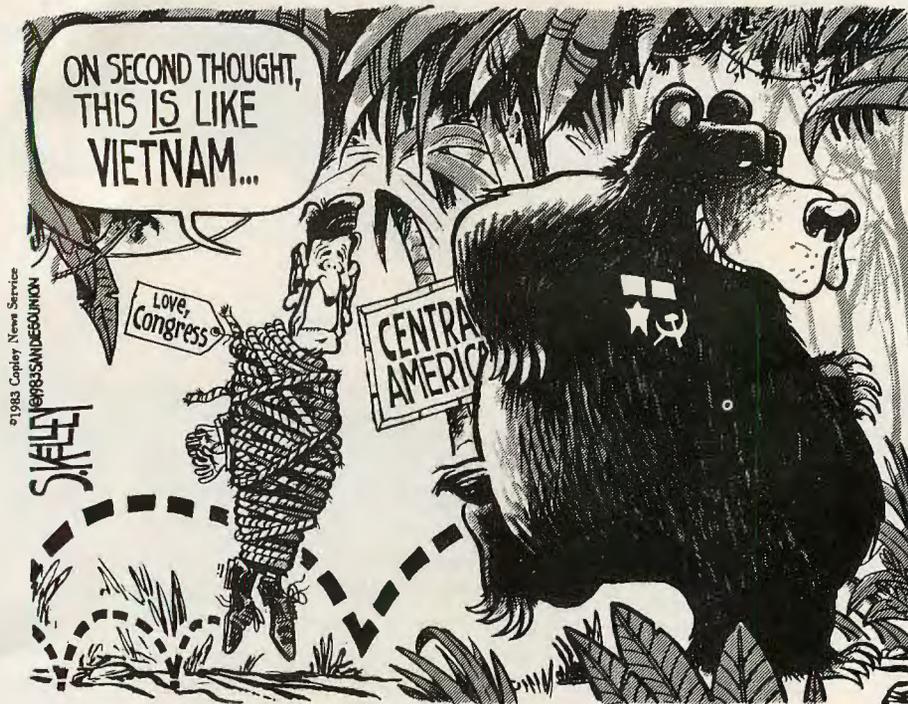


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EL SALVADOR

Another Vietnam? This Time Do It Right

by Robert J. Caldwell



“EL Salvador is Spanish for Vietnam.” That’s the message on a bumper sticker currently favored by liberals, trendies and other assorted “progressives” who oppose any effective U.S. measures to keep Central America out of the Soviet-Cuban orbit. One hears a similar pitch, if more subtly worded, from the Ted Kennedys and Christopher Dodds in Congress, and from their numerous admirers in the media. A comparable theme is echoed by the Marxist *comandantes* in Nicaragua and El Salvador. And no less a luminary than Fidel Castro himself offered an almost identical sentiment some months ago.

The tragedy is, they might be right. El Salvador might indeed be another Vietnam, with Honduras and Costa Rica standing in as doubles for Cambodia and Laos. Add one more likely domino, Guatemala, and perhaps Panama as well, and the United States would be looking at a debacle even more ominous than the one in Indochina.

Here is how it might happen. A timid, befuddled Congress grants the Reagan administration just enough aid to keep the Salvadoran military in the field but never enough to win. Ever eager to avoid “escalation” and a “wider war,” Congress votes progressively more stringent restrictions on the president’s freedom of action.

Thus, the administration is forced to stop supplying arms to anti-communist guerrillas in Nicaragua. Next comes legislation preventing the president from even threatening a naval and air quarantine of Nicaragua, much less Cuba. Predictably,

the guerrillas in El Salvador then go over to the offensive with the new supplies of arms and ammunition Nicaragua is happy to pass along now that the pressure on the Sandinistas has eased.

The Soviets and Cubans, smelling blood, pour another billion dollars or so in arms into Nicaragua and encourage the Sandinistas to step up the flow of “volunteers” into El Salvador.

At that point, the Reagan (or Mondale or Glenn or, heaven help us, Cranston) administration decides it must either intervene directly in El Salvador or negotiate the best deal it can get. Mindful of the “lessons” of Vietnam, it chooses to negotiate (“give peace a chance”). The betrayed Salvadorans are accordingly dragged into a transparent arrangement any fool can see will provide only a “decent interval” before the communists hold their victory parade in San Salvador.

Alternately, things might fall apart in Central America more quickly if the Reagan administration chooses to forego the preceding steps and negotiate now for a regional settlement cementing the Sandinistas in power and forcing the Salvadorans into a coalition government with the guerrillas.

Either way, the United States would suffer a strategic defeat and those Central Americans who failed to make it to Florida, Texas or California would start reliving the nightmare of the Vietnamese, Laotians and Cambodians.

If these scenarios sound alarmist, consider what has happened already. The Reagan administration must bend itself into a pretzel every few months to

coax Congress into releasing another dollop of aid for the Salvadoran military. Guatemala has yet to get any military aid at all, and the House of Representatives voted last July to cut off all assistance to anti-communist Nicaraguan guerrillas.

The chief sin of the Nicaraguan Contras, it seems, was that they actually wanted to win! Thus we had the spectacle of the United States House of Representatives voting 228-195 to deny arms to guerrillas trying to overthrow Marxist dictatorship allied to both Cuba and the Soviet Union. That vote was in the best tradition of earlier congressional votes to cut military aid to South Vietnam by 50 percent in 1973-74, terminate all air support for Cambodian troops in 1973 and stop all shipments of ammunition to those trying to defend Phnom Penh from the Khmer Rouge in 1975.

Or how about this Vietnam analogy? To get even inadequate levels of aid for the Salvadoran Army, Reagan must promise repeatedly that the administration is not seeking a "military solution" at the expense of a "political settlement." In plain language, that means giving up the chance for victory in favor of a negotiated compromise with Marxist-Leninists who, if abundant history is any guide, will disregard any promise the moment it is advantageous to do so.

If the American people, Congress and the Reagan administration really want to avoid another Vietnam — but still preclude a strategic addition to the Soviet empire — they will never have a better chance than the one that now presents itself in Central America.

In Vietnam, geography favored the communist bloc. In Central America, it favors the United States and its allies. The Caribbean is still largely an American lake, the Soviet Union is half a world away, and the shaky Sandinista dictatorship is at the end of a long, vulnerable supply line. Should the United States decide to impose a sea and air quarantine on Nicaragua blocking all arms shipments, neither Cuba nor the Soviet Union would dare challenge it directly.

In Vietnam, some of our allies fought bravely and well, but others had to be almost prodded into battle. In Central America, the Salvadorans and Guatemalans are more than willing to fight, as are the tough Nicaraguan Contras. What they need from us are the weapons, training and logistical support to get the job done.

In Vietnam, Americans were outsiders; aliens who rarely spoke the language and rarely understood the culture. Moreover, Americans never quite overcame the stigma cast on all Westerners in that country by nearly a century of French colonialism. Central America's Latin culture is familiar to millions of Anglos from Miami to Los Angeles. The gringo may sometimes be resented for past sins but the average Salvadoran, Guatemalan or Nicaraguan still has many favorable impressions of the United States and its people.

Finally, of course, there are the striking differences in military scale. U.S. and allied forces in Vietnam fought whole divisions of communist troops. Hanoi's final offensive in 1975 involved virtually the entire North Vietnamese Army — 24

divisions according to Gen. Van Tien Dung, then the NVA's chief of staff.

The best estimates place the number of guerrillas in El Salvador at between 6,000 and 8,000. The Guatemalans are presently contending with something less than 2,500 armed insurgents. Honduras has perhaps a few hundred at most. And the population of Nicaragua, now the Central American equivalent of North Vietnam, is 2.4 million — one-tenth the number commanded by Hanoi.

Given all this, only gross incompetence or an abject failure of will in Washington could produce a U.S. defeat in Central America. If Congress could somehow be induced to see farther than the end of its collective nose, and if the American people could be rallied by a proper exercise of presidential leadership, victory in Central America could almost certainly be obtained, and without sending the Marines.

To win, the real lessons of Vietnam must be recognized. That means adopting a coherent military and political strategy designed to produce victory rather than a sterile standoff. This time, there must not be granting of sanctuaries while friendly forces are condemned to fight a defensive war of attrition on the enemy's terms. Time must be made to work for us, not for them. And, of course, the friendly forces doing the fighting on the ground must be given adequate levels of military aid.

The Reagan administration and all those who would oppose a Soviet-bloc victory in Central America must also seize the moral high ground. Why apologize for helping governments that don't yet meet perfect standards of democracy and human rights when we know that the communist alternative is infinitely worse? Of course, there are social and economic injustices in Central America, and varying degrees of authoritarian rule as well. That's the norm in most of the Third World.

The proper question is: How best to remedy these ills? It's a certainty the desired reforms will never stand a chance if Central America is turned into a series of Soviet-Cuban satellites.

Those with misplaced qualms about asserting U.S. power should be reminded of Alexander Solzhenitsyn's apt observation: "I would rather have the United States as the world's policeman than the Soviet Union as the world's jailer."

The first law for a nation that would remain a great power is that it must act like one. For the United States, this imperative is more than just a matter of pride, jingoism, or — as the Marxists would have us believe — "imperialism." Faced with an implacably hostile and expansionist Soviet empire, the United States must remain a superpower, and act like one, simply to survive.

To survive, the United States must also protect a network of alliances and friendly countries around the world. And if we cannot manage the defeat of a few thousand guerrillas and terrorists in our own backyard and at the very extremity of Soviet reach, who will believe that we can still defend Western Europe, the Middle East, East Asia and all the vulnerable places in between?

Another Vietnam? Hell no. This time, we must do it right. ✕

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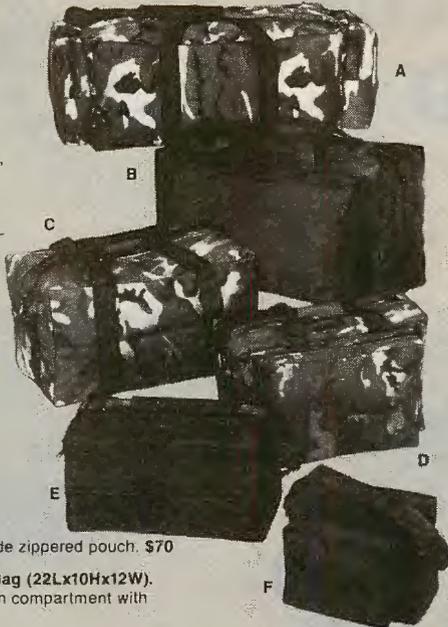
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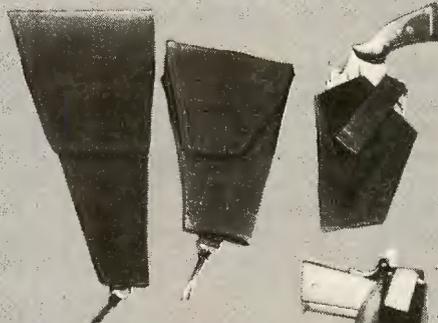
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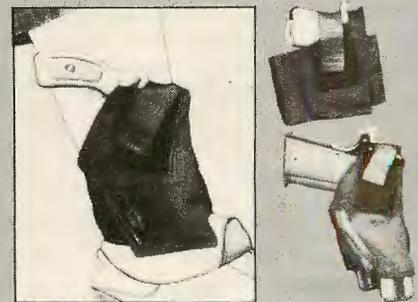


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SOVIET CHILD'S PLAY...

Seen from a distance, the Russian school children appeared to be engaged in some sort of physical training exercise, something close to ballet. Upon closer inspection, the Western observers found that the exercise was not dance-related at all. The school children, boys and girls aged 15 and under, were practicing grenade-throwing.

Grenade-throwing is just one aspect of the war games, called *Zarnitsa*, which Soviet children participate in as a mandatory part of their educational training. *Zarnitsa*, which means "Summer Lightning," is a two-year cycle of simulated war games during which the Soviet Army and Young Pioneers (the Russian militarized version of Boy and Girl Scouts) train 30 million youngsters under the age of 15. Leonid Brezhnev, the late Soviet leader, conceived the youth militarization program and put it into practice in 1967 to give Soviet youth a taste of combat.

Thus, many Russian children spend their afternoons and summers following tanks, challenging obstacle courses, firing AK-47s, crawling stealthily through improvised "jungle," lobbing grenades and marching across rugged terrain in hot, rubber gas masks.

What did you learn in school today, Ivan?

SPIRIT OF CHRISTMAS PAST...

To infuse some seasonal cheer into our December special, Bob Larson, contributing writer and husband of SOF Senior Editor M.L. Jones, contributed the poem, "Christmas in Korea (Frozen Chosen)." It is reprinted from *Stars and Stripes'* December 1953 issue:

'Twas the night before Christmas
And all through the tent
'Twas the odor of fuel oil
(The stove pipe was bent).
The shoe pacs were hung
Above each sack with care
In the hope that St. Nick
Would bring each man a new pair.
When up on the ridgeline
There arose such a clatter —
A Chicom machine gun had started
to chatter.
In rushed the first sergeant,
A joker named Kelly,
A tough little Mick
With a little round belly.
"Up Ackers, up, Wilson, up, Nelson,
up, Jones.
Out of the sack and rustle your
bones
Up on the ridgeline and don't you
come back
'Til you knock off that slope
And bring his gun back."
He shook as he spoke

BULLETIN BOARD

by Donna DuVall



OH, THAT AFGHANISTAN! MY, YES...
TO THINK THAT IT WAS NECESSARY
TO GO IN THERE AND FORCE THOSE
REACTIONARY TRIBES TO BELIEVE IN
BROTHERHOOD, PEACE AND LOVE!

©1983 Copley News Service

SWINMAN

The night was so cold.
His cigarette stank
(The tobacco was old).
He looked at us all
And in a voice soft and light,
Said, "Merry Christmas, you guys,
May you live through the night."

ANNOUNCING ARMY AVIATION...

Based on a study that showed aviation as an increasingly important combat maneuver element, the Department of Army created Army Aviation as a new branch. It will be headquartered at the Army's Aviation Center, Fort Rucker, Alabama.

PARATROOPERS MEET IN ISRAEL...

Michael D. Epstein is soliciting applications for the Second World Congress of Paratroopers in Israel for 1984. It will be held in May. All Airborne qualified veterans and active jumpers will go through Jump School with the Israeli Army, make a jump, qualify for Israel wings, and tour Israel for one week. Paras from many countries will be there. There will be a limit of 500 jumpers so if you are interested contact the Second World Congress of Paratroopers no later than November 15 at 606 West Barry Street — Suite 181, Chicago, Illinois 69657. SOF will have a team there!

WCC CENSURES AFGHAN REBELS...

At a recent global Christian conference, the World Council of Churches voted for a resolution calling for a cutoff of arms to the Afghan rebels, but did not call for the immediate withdrawal of Russian troops from Afghanistan. Instead, at the request of the Soviet delegation to "tread softly about Afghanistan," the Council adopted a vaguely worded resolution calling for the "withdrawal of Soviet troops from Afghanistan in the context of an overall political settlement, including agreement between Afghanistan and the USSR."

U.S. church delegates voted with their Soviet brothers on the resolution.

Anglican Bishop Alexander J. Malik of Pakistan strongly criticized the WCC action. "If any Western country acted the way the Soviets are acting in Afghanistan, it would be judged and denounced in the strongest possible language."

ARMY'S NEW COLORS...

The U.S. Army has a new camouflage scheme for its 1,000 types of camouflaged vehicles that is not only less visible, but also less expensive, claims Henry R. Atkinson, chief of the countersurveillance and deception division at the Army's mobile equipment

Continued on page 34

Making the best better.

The evolution of Colt's 1911 Government Model.

1911 The Model 1911 Semi-automatic pistol is adopted by the U.S. Ordnance Department. Commercial models are made available to civilians.

1923 Model 1911 is refined: trigger width is decreased; back projection of the grip safety is increased; *arched* main spring housing is installed. New military designation is made: Model 1911A1.

1931 Model 1911A1 chambered for 22LR. Designated "The Ace", it incorporates a "floating chamber", which almost duplicates the recoil associated with the 45 ACP, using 22LR ammunition.

1957 "Gold Cup National Match" is introduced. This model gives the competitive shooter a pistol which, "out of the box", can be used in major competitions. It incorporates a select match barrel, handfitted and honed parts, and adjustable rear target sight.

1970 MK IV series 70 Model 1911A1 is introduced. It incorporates a new spring-type bushing and barrel system to improve accuracy. Chambered for 45 ACP, 38 Super and 9MM parabellum.

1983 Colt introduces the MK IV Series 80. This new series has the original standard of excellence associated with the MK IV Series 70, and in addition allows the option of carrying the pistol fully loaded, "**cocked and locked**". Since its adoption by the U.S. Government, the Model 1911 has earned the reputation of being the most reliable automatic pistol ever produced . . . the benchmark of its time.

The Model 1911 incorporated a grip safety, a manual thumb safety, and a slide stop which automatically holds the slide rearward after the last round. Now, with the addition of a firing pin lock, Colt has gone one step further in improving the outstanding performance of the Government Model.

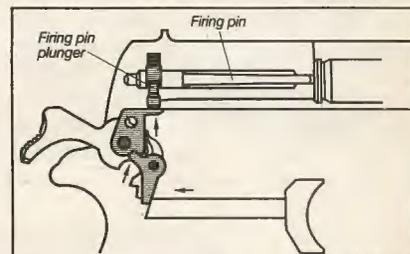
Carried "**cocked and locked**", the MK IV Series 80 pistol gives you consistent single action accuracy from the first round to the last, without the awkward heavy trigger pull found in conventional double action pistols.

The new MK IV Series 80 pistols are the safest, most effective Model 1911 pistols on the market and still retain the same rugged features of the original.

For over 70 years, through four major wars, the Colt Government Model has had a reputation for reliability and excellence. Which is why we never stop trying to make the best even better.

1949

More compact, slightly shorter and lighter version of the Model 1911A1 is introduced. It has an aluminum alloy forged frame and is called the "Commander L.W."



In the rest position the firing pin is blocked from forward motion by the firing pin plunger. Pulling the trigger disengages the firing pin plunger, enabling the firing pin to move forward for ignition.



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Be a safe shooter—Never chamber a round until you are ready to shoot. Always read and follow the instruction manuals which accompany each firearm. Free instruction manuals are also available from the factory on request.

IT HAPPENED TO ME

Death of an Angel

by Salvador Jemente Jr. as told to M.L. Jones

Salvador Jemente Jr. is now a letter carrier for the U.S. Post Office but in 1968 he was a lance corporal, Delta Company 1/9, Third Marine Division, RVN. As he tells it:

IT was a typical, miserable, hot day at Con Tien and Delta Company had just finished a search-and-destroy operation around the DMZ. The mission hadn't turned out too well for us and we were all tired, nervous and hungry.

Suddenly, we heard those old familiar words: "Mount up!" This time the Gunnys' words sounded heavenly: We were going to the rear for R&R.

The road to the rear passed a little village where the people were friendly. They respected and admired the Marines, especially those who set up the perimeter around the town. Passing through the village reminded me of a World War II movie: Adults and children stood along-

side the road as a convoy passed through, and the soldiers would throw them candy bars, C-rations and sometimes clothes.

Today as the company passed through, throwing candy at the people lined up along the road, I noticed a beautiful little Vietnamese girl wearing a white dress. She must have been three or four years old. As our truck passed her, I saw she was holding something.

She walked toward the truck and lifted up her hand as if she were going to toss what she was holding.

Someone screamed, "Grenade!"

We all started shooting at anything that moved. Men, women and children ran in every direction, crying and screaming for us to stop.

When it was over, I looked around at the tumbled dead bodies. Then I saw her. She lay still and her dress was now red. I picked her up in my arms and held her close to me for a long, long time.

At the mass burial, I dug her a grave of her own and made a marker: "Little Angel."

Afterward, we learned the VC were hiding ammo to attack our convoys with; the little girl found the ammo dump and picked up the grenade. She'd been trying to show us what she'd found.

Now, whenever I see a little girl in a white dress, the memory of that little angel comes alive. I will never forget her. ✕

If you have a personal adventure for "It Happened to Me" or "I Was There," triple-space type it and send it to SOF, P.O. Box 693, Boulder, CO 80306, Attn: M.L. Jones. All stories should be 500 words or less. Upon publication, SOF will become owner of all publication rights. Submitted articles are subject to editing and revision, although their content and theme will not be changed.

Photos (with captions and credits) are also helpful. Captions should be typed on a separate sheet of paper and keyed to each photograph.

Enclose a stamped, self-addressed envelope so we can notify you of acceptance or return your story. Article payment is \$50, upon publication. All entrants will receive an SOF patch.

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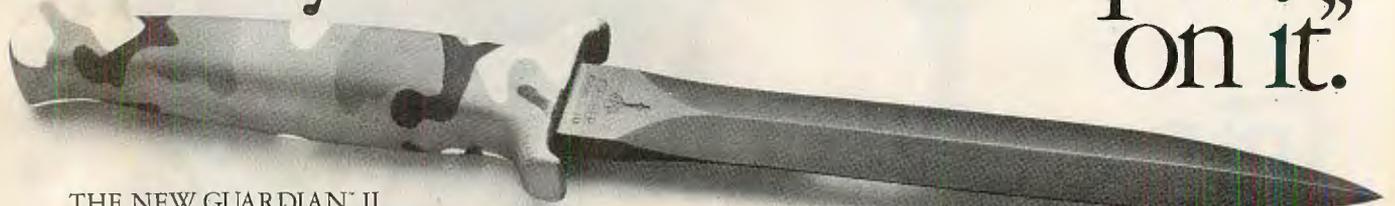
Matching jungle pattern on handle and scabbard blends perfectly with most camouflage clothing.



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MILITARY small arms. Which are the best? Which have proven themselves to be among the worst? Potentially loaded questions? You bet. But, after a quarter of a century of blowing my ear drums out, I'm bound to have formulated some rather specific opinions. The following are just that: my opinions, given at the risk of stirring up a witch's cauldron of hysterical cries of outrage and protest. Some of the categories I have chosen, in order to expand the scope of this article (and hedge some of my bets), are a bit arbitrary by today's standards.

Let's start with the weapon of smallest size and consequence in combat, the pistol, usually no more than a placebo. The Colt Model 1911A1, without doubt, takes first place. Now more than 70 years old, it's still going strong. Reliable beyond question, with high hit probability in the hands of those trained to use it, its .45 ACP cartridge will more than do the job, except against the ever more prevalent body armor. In 9mm Parabellum, John Browning's P35 Hi Power also rates a top billing. More recently, Beretta's 92 SB, the Czech VZ 75 and the compact HK P7 have shown well-deserved signs of challenging the venerable Hi Power's position as king of the 9mm mountain.

In machine pistols, the Beretta 93R has brought this long-shunned species back to prominence. Deservedly so, as the 93R has become the epitome of the genre.

Submachine guns, dying now, have



FULL AUTO

The Good, the Bad & the Worthless

by Peter G. Kokalls

still come a long way since their brief period of dominance during WWII. Yet, they will continue to have their uses and one cannot go wrong with either the Sterling L2A3 (Mk4) or the Beretta Model 12S, both state-of-the-art in every sense of the word. The choice here is a toss-up. You pay your money and you take your choice.

There is no choice, however, when it comes to suppressed submachine guns.

The Sterling L34A1 (Mk5) stands alone. It is superlative. It reaches a level of sound suppression, reliability and hit probability to which all others can merely aspire.

Fighting shotguns: My choice here is the H&K-imported Benelli Model 121 M1. But the concept has yet to reach fruition and other serious contenders will soon loom upon the horizon.

When it comes to assault rifles, the first, the German WWII MP 44, in caliber 7.92mm Kurz, still ranks as one of the best after almost four decades. The outstanding success in this category, however, has been the Kalashnikov (both the AK-47 and AKM). Its minor deficiencies are more than offset by its tremendous reliability and robust design. Built to standards of combat accuracy only, it will more than do, thank you, and something like 20 million have been manufactured to date.

Born in a storm of controversy which lingers to this day, the M16A1, as presently produced, is also one of the world's finest. The new M16A2 should be even better. Also deserving mention are the fine Israeli Galil and the Beretta AR 70 series. But, if 7.62mm NATO remains your game, then FN FAL or HK G3 must be your name (without full-auto, please).

In sniper rifles, I'll take the M21 (M14 with Leatherwood ART II scope). Bolt-action rifles will deliver superior accuracy, but we're not shooting at woodchucks, are we? When the targets shoot back as they bob and weave, I'll take the M14 over the slower bolt gun any day of the year. The 7.62mm NATO cartridge really shines at this kind of work.

Moving up the scale of destruction, we arrive at belt-fed light machine guns (LMGs). The recoil-operated Browning 1919 A4/A6 walks off with the blue ribbon. Still in use all over the world, its reputation for reliability was won honestly in dozens of wars. An overlapping cate-

Continued on page 28

THE WARRIOR'S EDGE.

AL MAR KNIVES P.O. Box 1626, Lake Oswego, Oregon 97034, U.S.A.

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Knife length: 12"

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Hitler and Tojo never knew where it would strike next. But they knew it would strike again. They knew they had to tie up troops to guard against it—troops they needed elsewhere. The story of the "Steel Hand" is now four decades old. "There comes from the sea a hand of steel which plucks...sentries from their posts" is how Churchill described the Commandos. This quotation also came to apply to our own commando-type outfits: the U.S. Marine Raiders, the U.S. Army Rangers, and the U.S.-Canadian First Special Service Force.

Now, in the 40th anniversary year of some of the most daring exploits of World War II, these gallant Commandos are being honored through the issuance of the Commando Commemorative Fighting Knife. This special knife is being produced to wartime specifications by the Hanover Works of Frank Mills & Co., Ltd., Sheffield, England, in a strictly limited edition.

Presentation Quality

The seven-inch, double-edged blade is forged of the finest carbon sword steel. The blade is hand-ground, hardened, tempered, polished to a mirror finish and richly blued. The presentation face of the knife is deeply etched with the insignia of Combined Operations, the title "The Army Commandos," the active service dates (1940-1945), and the early wartime unit patch with Commando shoulder tab.

The blade reverse bears the maker's mark, the inscription "They performed whatsoever their King commanded," a Victoria Cross (Great Britain's highest gallantry award), Churchill's esteem for the Commandos: "When shall their glory fade," and a toggle rope (used for scaling obstacles). All of this detail is gold-gilt infilled.

1942 Pattern

The grip is the 1942 ribbed pattern in the original wartime alloy. The grip, topnut and crossguard are highly polished and heavily plated with 18-karat gold. The Commando Commemorative Fighting Knife is limited to only 2500 knives worldwide, which includes those for the members of the Commando Association and The American Historical Foundation. The limited edition serial number is engraved on the reverse shoulder of the blade.



With your Commando Commemorative you will also receive a numbered Certificate of Authenticity and a copy of Hitler's top-secret "Commando Order" with English translation, (in which he orders the execution of any captured Commandos). In addition, you will be made a member of The American Historical Foundation and receive expert information concerning the history, care, display and collecting of firearms, edged weapons and militaria.

Glass-Top Display Case

You may also reserve the optional glass-top dis-

play case. It may be wall mounted, either vertically or horizontally, or displayed flat on a shelf. Lined in scarlet velvet, the hardwood case measures 15½" × 6" × 1¾". The knife is easily removed from its secure metal bracket from the rear of the case.

How To Reserve

This is available exclusively from The American Historical Foundation. You may call, write, personally visit or use the reservation form below. Reservations will be honored on a first-come, first-served basis. Satisfaction is guaranteed. Immediate action in placing your reservation will assure you the lowest possible registry number. Requests for special registry numbers will be honored, if available.

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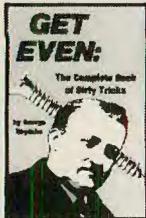
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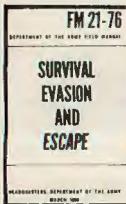
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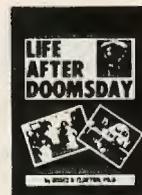
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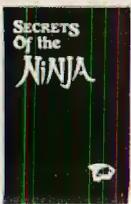
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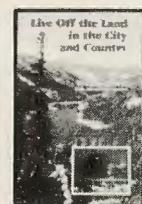
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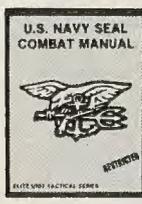
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Continued from page 24



gory, magazine-fed light machine guns, has only one contender of distinction, the Bren. One of the monumental military small-arms developments of all time, the Bren lives on in the L4 series (7.62mm NATO), made as recently as 1982 in India. It would be difficult to fault the Bren in any area, except perhaps weight. I have never yet seen a broken Bren firing pin or extractor and I have no doubt my grandchildren will someday wonder why I kept so many spare parts for it.

Falling somewhere between the light machine gun and the medium machine gun is the GPMG (general purpose machine gun), which is supposed to serve at both the squad level and as a medium support weapon when mounted on a tripod. How well the concept has been served is open to debate, as many feel these guns are too heavy for squad use and too light to serve as medium support weapons. Be that as it may, it all started with the overly complex MG 34, which was supplanted by the MG 42. Now known as the MG3 (in caliber 7.62mm NATO), the MG 42 is still a fine weapon. The best GPMG so far produced is the FN MAG, though it is a bit on the heavy side.

Although not strictly part of the definition, the most successful medium machine guns have all been water-cooled. While it disgruntles me somewhat to do so, I must rank the Browning 1917A1 over the Vickers. With marginally superior reliability and a less complex lock mechanism than the Vickers, the Browning gun rates first place by just a link's width.

We are now well within the era of the

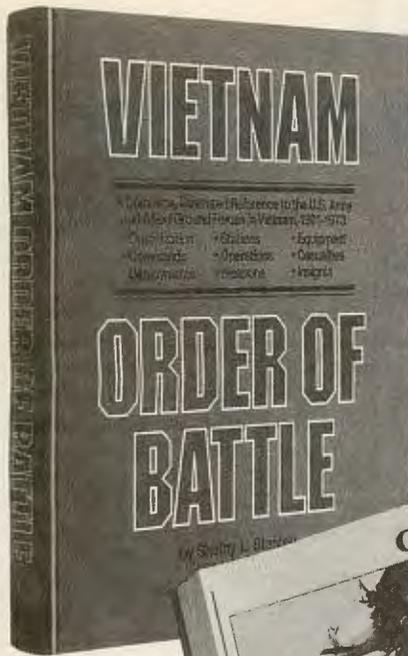
A few of the very best: Browning .30 cal. 1919A6 (rear), M16A1 and Soviet AKM (leaning against Browning), .50-cal. M2 HB (center), Sterling L34A1 suppressed SMG and Beretta 12S (left and right against M2), Bren with 100-rd. drum (before M2), and Beretta 70/78 SAW. Photo: Peter G. Kokalis

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What about the worst? My dung heap of military small arms includes, not in any particular order of revulsion, the Nambu Type 94, Italian Glisenti, Czech VZ 38, and S&W's Model 39 and 59 pistols; the MAC-10, Reising M55, M3 "grease gun," American 180 and Danish Madsen M50 submachine guns; the Australian Leader and L2A1 HB FAL, the French FAMAS and the Costa Rican Breda assault rifles; and the BAR (sorry, Marines), Danish Madsen-Saetter, French Chauchat and AAT 52, Italian Revelli, and the U.S. M73 and M60 (come down to El Salvador and I'll show you a few things about this ill-conceived piece of junk) machine guns.

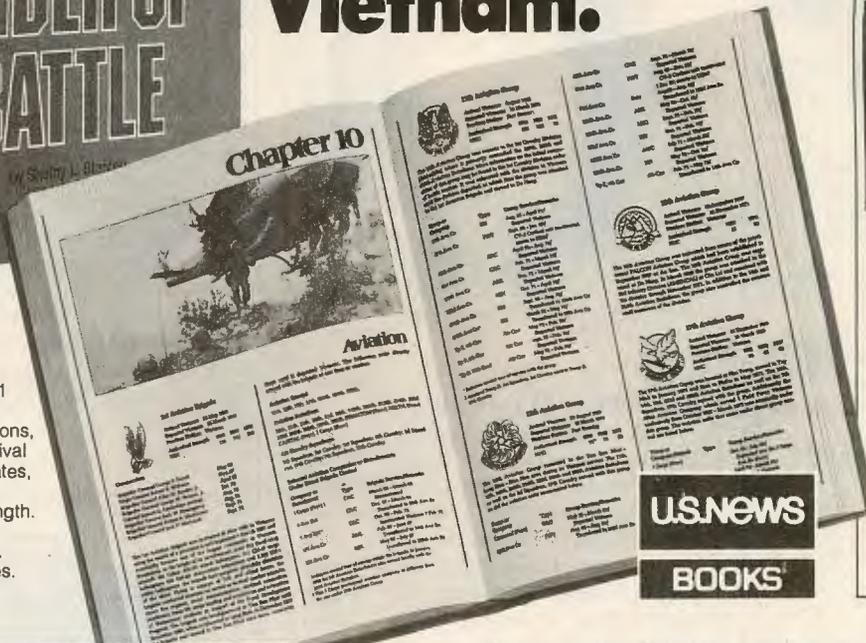
And there you have it, some bottles of Chateau Lafitte-Rothschild and a few rusty cans of worms. Fire your incoming salvos. I'm already dug in. ☒



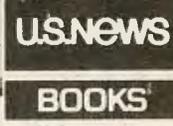
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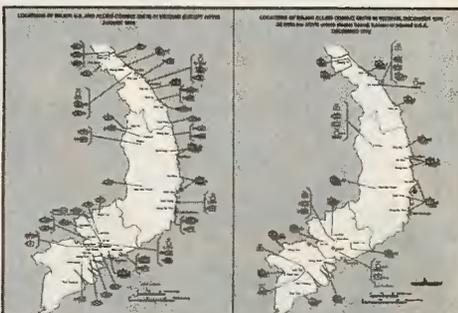
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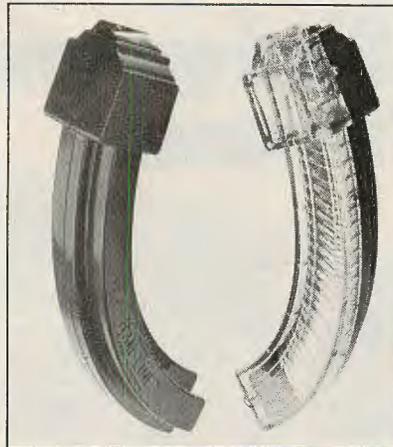
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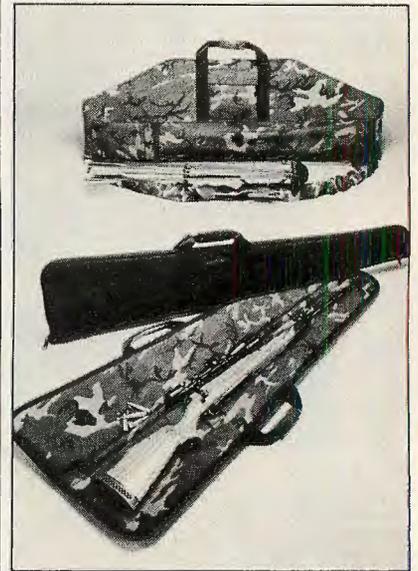
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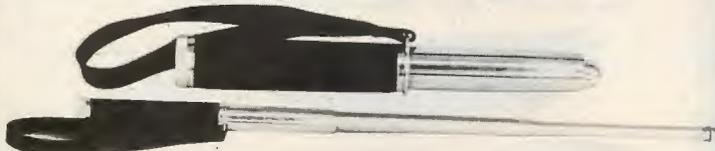
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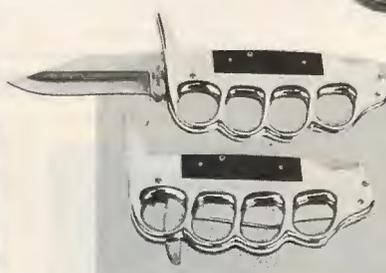
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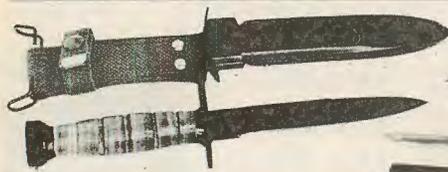


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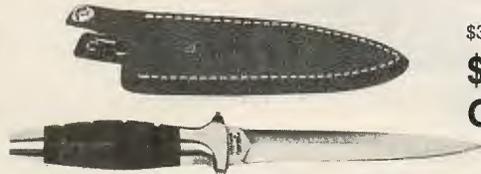


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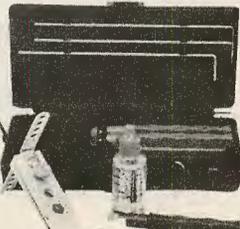
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BULLETIN BOARD



Continued from page 20

research and development command (MERADCOM).

The new color scheme is simpler in design and uses three colors — brown, green and black — of cheaper paint, instead of the four currently used, hence the monetary savings. The new war-paint design features broad splotches of color computer-designed for each type of vehicle. The new paint, though less expensive, will be chemically treated so it doesn't absorb toxins used in chemical/biological warfare.

The new camouflage design is part of an attempt by the United States and West Germany to standardize NATO camouflage. The first of the newly disguised vehicles should be available this fall.

HISPANIC VETS SEEK HAYDEN'S OUSTER...

"While Tom Hayden was being wine and dined in Hanoi, our people [Hispanic Americans] were being killed and maimed in mud holes in South Vietnam. Our people responded to America's call and served their country



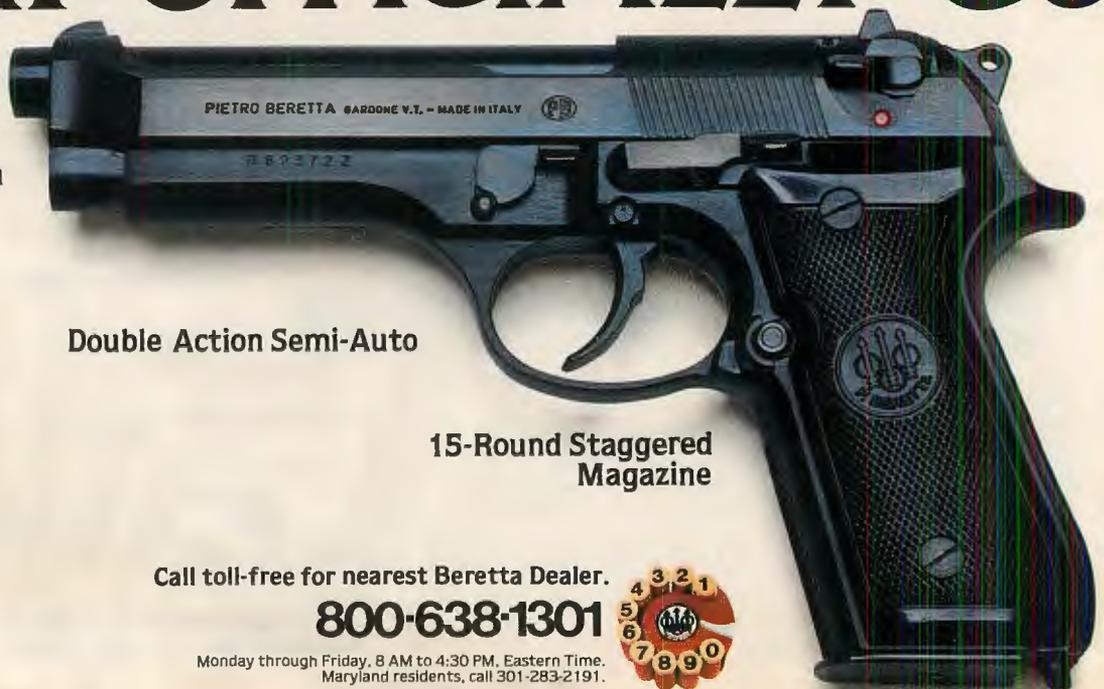
Medics Phil Gonzales (left) and John Padgett (right) work on wounded Salvadoran soldier with sucking chest wound at San Francisco Gotera while *Soldier of Fortune* Editor/Publisher Robert K. Brown and another Salvadoran assist. Just minutes after SOF team's August arrival, this soldier and one with a stomach wound were brought in from battle a short distance away in Morazan Province. Prompt action on the part of the SOF-sponsored medics saved both soldiers. A full report will be in the January issue.

well. They didn't deserve the likes of Tom Hayden," declared Dr. Peter Luna, vice chairman of the Hispanic Veterans of California (HVC) and a Vietnam veteran, at a press conference in Los Angeles to demand the immediate removal of Hayden from the California legislature.

The press conference was jointly sponsored by the GI Forum, an all-Hispanic veterans' organization with more than 150,000 members nationwide, and the Armed Forces Retirees

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Association, Calif. (AFRAC). The veterans' groups contend that Hayden's presence in the state legislature violates California's constitution, which states in Article VII, Section 9: "No person who advocates support of a foreign government against the United States in the event of hostilities shall hold any office in the state of California."

A.P. Long, chairman of HVC, said, "We are disturbed that a person with Hayden's credentials, who has humiliated America and endangered our fighting personnel at a time of combat, can remain in office when the constitution of California clearly states that he can't. It is an insult to those who have lost their lives and to families of those men and women to have that man governing us today."

A petition has been introduced into the California Assembly by several veterans' organizations, representing half a million veterans, demanding the immediate removal of Hayden.



CASTRO ADVISES NICARAGUA...

Jack Anderson in his 3 August *Washington Post* column stated that U.S. intelligence sources intercepted a secret message from Cuba's Fidel Castro to top Nicaraguan leaders in which he advised them to make no concessions to democracy. Citing the example of former Chilean Marxist dictator, Salvador Allende, Castro reportedly said that Allende's mistake "was to continue democratic traditions rather than impose a left-wing dictatorship."

SOUND ADVICE...

As high technology is becoming more sophisticated and long-ranged, radio communication has even wider uses in military, paramilitary and intelligence operations. Information about a country — including updates about coups, bombings, hijackings and rumors of war — can easily be obtained by tuning in on shortwave broadcasts from the country on any multi-band shortwave receiver.

For example, among the current hot spots, Nicaragua has several clandestine stations, broadcasting anti-Somoza programs from secret locations: "Radio Miskud," at 0200 hours UTC on 6870 khz (just below the 40-meter amateur radio band) and "Radio 5 September" at 0200 and 1100 hours UTC on 700 AM, 5565 and 6800 khz.



What happens after you present a *Soldier of Fortune* press card to the ministry of defense in some countries? SOF's Karl Phaler found this neatly dressed security type — trying unsuccessfully to look nonchalant — dogging him for the next three days in Morocco.

El Salvador's rebels use "Radio Venceremos" on 97 FM. All the above stations broadcast in Spanish. One pro-Nicaraguan station, "Voice of Nicaragua," has hourly English news bulletins from 0100 to 0600 hours on 5955 khz.

For more information on how shortwave radios can increase your knowledge of what's going on in the world, read the *World Radio TV Handbook*, available from Gilfer Associates, Box 239, Park Ridge, NJ 07656. This handbook is updated annually and sells for \$17.50. ✕

HANDGUNS ARMS CONNECTICUT.

The Connecticut State Police put the Beretta 92SB through the Third Degree before selecting it as the firearm to protect its officers. Gruelling tests for firepower, reliability, safety, accuracy and reloadability got it on the job. And switching law enforcement handguns isn't done casually. This 15-round 9mm semi-automatic proves out just plain better than its competition.

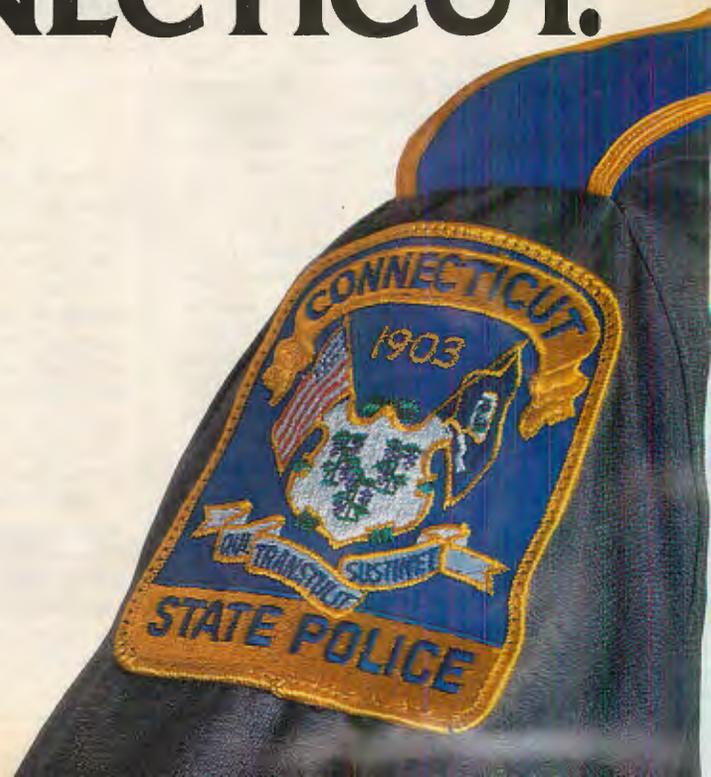
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TWO TO TANGLE



Jumper floats under canopy after exiting UH-1D at 1,500 feet. Kneeling jumpmaster watches from chopper.



Sgt. Eric Bergstrom (lower right) has just fallen through modification of Sgt. Michael Turner's MC1-1 canopy.

by John Padgett

Photos by Phillip Gonzales

IT was to be a routine training parachute jump for the members of the Detachment A-315, 3rd Battalion, 12th Special Forces Group (Abn). Together with members of the Headquarters Detachment, they were jumping onto Tubbs Island, just north of their base at Hamilton Field, Calif.

The jump, cancelled the previous evening due to high winds, was going well. The July sun had heated the coastal air, and the helicopter pilots were flying at 1,500 feet, allowing the parachutists a little extra time aloft. The UH-1D Iroquois carried eight jumpers at a time, a stick of four exiting first the right door, then the left.

Sgt. Michael Turner was the first to exit the right side of the aircraft and Sgt. Eric Bergstrom then followed out the left door. Bergstrom had a slight tangle in his suspension lines and bicycled in the air to undo them. Those few seconds of being unable to control his descent brought him into collision with Sgt. Turner.

Bergstrom initially landed on Turner's parachute and attempted to run off and jump,

SF TEAM

John E. Padgett and Phil Gonzales have been around. Special Forces medics, Padgett did four years and Gonzales spent two in Vietnam.

Gonzales met SOF Editor/Publisher Robert K. Brown at Brown's A-team camp at Tong Le Chong, and they collaborated on an article for *The Green Beret*. Padgett and Gonzales knew each other in 'Nam, but never worked together until after they returned from further travels.

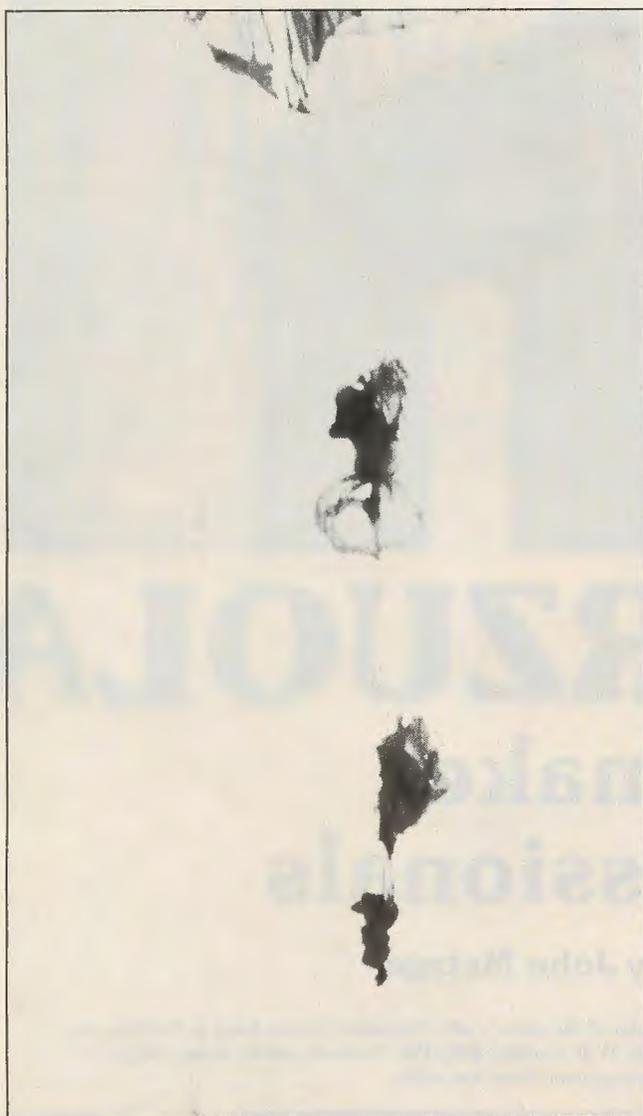
Padgett headed for Nicaragua as a health worker, where he met Nguyen "Bobby" Van Nguyen. (See "May Buddha Bless Bobby," SOF, October '82.) After several more years of traveling the world establishing rural health networks in underdeveloped areas, he

returned to the States.

Gonzales kept his military vocation for a while longer, and went to Panama with the 8th Special Forces Group. He wangled a separation from service while in Panama, and began work as a medic and dig foreman for an archaeological expedition with the New York City Museum of Natural History with Curator of Anthropology Junius Bird. A vet who never came home, after the excavation was done Gonzales plunged back into the bush as a volunteer health worker with the Choco and Cuna Indians.

In the mid-'70s they agreed to begin new professional lives as a writer (Padgett) and a photographer. They both still jump and are presently trying to open a minor-trauma clinic in Salinas, Calif., with two Vietnam-service former Special Forces doctors.

Paratroopers Learn to Unwind



Turner (above) twists in cocoon of Bergstrom's 'chute after it was dragged through Turner's modification.



Bergstrom's reserve finally inflated, moving him out of the line of Turner's fall.

as trained, but fell through the modification in the MC1-1 parachute, collapsing it, and became entangled in the nylon. Turner, below him, saw this happen and pulled the handle of his reserve parachute, which despite his efforts to feed it out, fluttered limply in the draft created by the fall. Bergstrom had pulled his reserve rip-cord handle, and it first fell away from him, then billowed up to partially deploy around his legs and buttocks.

"Things were looking pretty bleak there for a while," Bergstrom said, "My feet were above my head and I felt myself accelerating." He knew he had to quickly and efficiently unravel himself to free his reserve. Fumbling would probably have cost both troopers their lives.

Neither Bergstrom or Turner panicked. "Basically we just had to get everything

unwrapped," said Turner, "we really didn't have time for anything else." Bergstrom's reserve finally inflated, moving him out of the line of Turner's fall.

Both Special Forces troopers credit their high degree of training with saving their lives. On the way down, they talked with each other and began step-by-step immediate action, displaying the professionalism common to U.S. military parachutists.

However, they may have received help from another quarter as well. Those on the drop zone heard the chaplain praying — so hard tears came to his eyes. "I was pretty choked-up," said SF Lt. Col. Sipantzi.

Bergstrom and Turner landed and executed proper parachute landing falls in a tangle of parachutes and lines.

The medics, SFC Phillip Gonzales and myself (then warrant officer) were amazed.

After examining the two men, we determined them to be uninjured — not a scratch. Gonzales had lowered his camera, running across the DZ with his bag, while I, dodging jumpers still in the air, had reached the men by ambulance. Bergstrom and Turner were laughing and shaking hands. The troops along the edge of the DZ broke into relieved applause. The parachutes were left in place for the riggers.

Ninety minutes later, the helicopter took off again. Turner and Bergstrom were aboard — not as medevac patients, as all had thought they would be — but as jumpers about to make another jump, during which they both landed safely and without incident. The DZSO (Drop Zone Safety Officer) closed the DZ and all went back to Hamilton Field. Miller time! ✕



BOB TERZUOLA

Knifemaker for Professionals

Text & Photos by John Metzger

BOB Terzuola makes knives in the K-zone. Soldiers of fortune around the world come to Guatemala to see him, and when they talk, Terzuola listens. Their knife ideas are his design inspirations.

"When I hear someone talk about what they want in a knife, my ears prick up," says Terzuola. "And living in this part of the world gives me plenty of opportunities to listen to new ideas."

A jade cutter by trade, Terzuola has made Antigua, Guatemala, his home for the last 14 years and started making knives in 1979. Terzuola is one of a limited number of bladesmiths around who takes the word "fighting" seriously when it comes to making combat knives. And his latest creation may be one of the best fighting knives ever made: The Battleguard.

The Battleguard was first conceived when *National Knife Collector* magazine asked Terzuola to produce two combat knives to be presented to the Soldier of the Year and NCO of the Year at the Special Forces Graduation Ball in June 1983. SF got the first two production models.

The major design criterion for the Battleguard is strength. Overall weight is 8.9 ounces, and the six-inch, double-edge, hol-

ABOVE: Shining examples of the cutler's art: Terzuola's knives hang in his shop door awaiting finishing. Photo: W.B. Guthrie **BELOW:** Terzuola calmly shapes dagger handle. Each knife is hand-ground from bar stock.



low-ground, dagger-point blade is ¼-inch thick. Overall length is 11 inches, and a full-thickness steel ridge runs down the center almost to the tip. Terzuola prefers to work with D2 tool steel tempered to Rockwell C57-59, but the knife is available in 440C stainless as well. The blade has an electromatte finish, which reduces glare. The black or green satin matte epoxy-sealed micarta handle is mortised to accept the blade, and fitted with stainless-steel bolts. The guard and handle are one piece.

The knife retails for \$200, and comes with a heat-formed epoxy-bonded nylon web sheath with velcro safety strap that fits on pistol belt, standard belt or webbing harness. Each Terzuola knife is packaged in a velvet-lined hardwood presentation box with signed lifetime guarantee, serial number and individual specifications of the enclosed knife.

Terzuola sees the knife as a tool, one that will be used hard. But along with practicality, he believes in the aesthetic value of a knife as well. "Grace is the most important thing to making a knife," he told me. "It's a question of millimeters. The knife is a tool, but anything that performs a function should be aesthetically appealing."

Compared to most fighting knives, the Battleguard is compact. The handle is large enough to be comfortable in any position: cross-palm, hammer-grip or anything in between. But the single-finger groove affords leverage for the saber grip that fits it best.

The Battleguard is Terzuola's new star, but he also makes five other combat/defense knives and a line of seven hunting/utility knives. Occasionally, he builds single-issue, one-of-a-kind items — knives that are never reproduced, combining rare and precious materials into a historical design, like samurai-style knives with jade handles.

"But I just do those for fun," laughed Terzuola. More seriously, he said, "The Battleguard was designed with soldiering in mind, and the ideas behind it are from soldiers."

Terzuola will make all knives to order, custom or modifications of his regular line. For example, a customer may order a Battleguard with any custom touches added such as type of steel and blade thickness. Or tell him your own knife idea, and Terzuola will try to make it for you.

Terzuola will be relocating to Santa Fe in 1984, but in the meantime, he can be contacted for ordering information in Guatemala by airmail. His address: Robert Terzuola, Apartado Postal 213, Antigua, Guatemala, Central America.

Bob Terzuola is an artist, and his combat knives are some of the best we've seen at SOF. Particularly, his custom knife-making capability merits attention — SOFers who want that just-so knife are advised to check into Terzuola's talents.

"I make knives because I like to," he told me. "Someday I would like to be known as the knifemaker for the professionals — making knives that are functional and affordable for professional people. ✎



ABOVE: Though most work is on his own designs, Terzuola also makes custom knives like this Japanese-style short sword. **BELOW:** Battleguard: Terzuola's latest knife is designed from recommendations of professional soldiers.



HECKLER & KOCH'S NEW 94

SOF Tests Deluxe Pistol-Caliber Carbine

Text & Photos

by Peter G. Kokalis

THOSE interested in a semiautomatic pistol carbine (all spinoffs of the sub-machine-gun genre) now have a third viable and well-made option, in addition to the UZI carbine and Sterling Mk6. With the introduction of its new HK94, Heckler & Koch has moved with vigor into this increasingly popular — albeit artificially defined — area of weaponry.

Semiauto pistol-caliber carbines are the inevitable mutants of the National Firearms Act of 1934, the Gun Control Act of 1968 and interpretation of these laws by the NFA branch of the BATF. If they have a buttstock, pistol carbines — by law — become rifles and must then have a barrel length greater than 16 inches. BATF has further insisted that they fire from the closed-bolt position (unlike most of their SMG antecedents) and that as many features as possible be incorporated into their design to preclude their conversion to full auto.

Of course, most of us realize that given enough time, ingenuity and access to machine-shop equipment, any semiautomatic firearm can eventually be converted to fire full auto. BATF response (not without justification) is an application of the law of diminishing returns.

Founded by Edmond Heckler, Alex Seidel and Theodore Koch, all former Mauser Werke employees, H&K commenced operations in 1948 in Oberndorf/Neckar as a manufacturer of sewing machine parts and gauges for the machine-tool industry. They've come a long way, baby.

Initially equipped with the M1 Garand rifle, the resurgent West German *Bundeswehr* moved in 1957 to the FN FAL. Eventually, 350,000 of this German model, called the G1 (for *Gewehr*, or rifle) were produced. The Germans were well-pleased with the G1 and approached FN for a license to manufacture the rifle in Germany. The director-general of Fabrique Nationale, the late Rene Laloux, refused and rudely insulted the German Ministry of Defense.

H&K MP5 is now the SMG of issue with the Salvadoran Army, although it is rarely carried on combat operations. While John Donovan checks demolitions handbook, Peter Kokalis strips and cleans MP5A3 in Airborne Bn. barracks at Ilopango Airport. Photo: Alex McColl





The German government immediately contacted the European licensee for the Spanish CETME rifle, which was NWM in the Netherlands. An arms agreement was reached quickly. NWM was to provide, in exclusivity, the *Bundeswehr* with 20mm ammunition, in return for which Germany was given a license to manufacture the CETME (called the G2).

The West German government granted the contract to both Rheinmetall and Heckler & Koch. Rheinmetall removed themselves from the scene since they were occupied with manufacture of the MG3 (7.62mm NATO version of the MG 42 GPMG). H&K refined the design further and it was adopted by the *Bundeswehr* as the G3. The rest is a history of worldwide acceptance and success known to all.

The salient feature of H&K's line of small arms is the delayed blowback, roller-locking system of operation. This method first appeared in the STG 45M developed at the Mauser Werke in 1945. It was part of the continuing evolution of the assault rifle concept initiated by the MP 44.

After the war, a former Mauser engineer connected with the STG 45M project, Ludwig Vorgrimler, built two prototype rifles in France using this type of breech mechanism. Contrary to rumor,

ABOVE: Bastard offspring of U.S. gun laws, HK94 pistol carbine performed like thoroughbred with Hensoldt 4x scope. **BELOW:** H&K MP5 — from which HK94 is derived — proved reliable, controllable and safe.



HK94-MP5

Except for long barrel, HK94 (above) looks just like MP5. Internal differences make '94 hard to convert.

American-market selector: "S" is "safe," "F" is "full-auto" but "E" means *einzeln* or "single."



Heavily textured knob-like HK94 retracting handle offers sure grip to overcome heavy cocking spring.

Complex, efficient H&K magazine loader.

H&K SMGs all take standard H&K scope mount.



BELOW: To the left is 15-rd. magazine (shown above), magazine loader/unloader, older straight 30-rd. magazine, new curved 30-rd. magazine and two-magazine clamp.



MP5/HK94 rear-sight apertures vary in diameter only; elevation remains constant.

Herr Vorgrimler was not responsible for the roller-locked, but dismal, French AAT 52 machine gun. Moving to Spain, Vorgrimler took up shop with CETME. By 1956 the CETME rifle was chambered for the 7.62mm NATO cartridge. In 1958 it was adopted by the Spanish Army, in a form equivalent to the early H&K G3, as the Model 58 assault rifle. A prior use of roller-locking is found also on the MG 42. However, the MG 42 is recoil-operated and gas-assisted and fires from the open-bolt position.

The Heckler & Koch weapons operate as follows. The bolt mechanism consists of two major components: the bolt head and the bolt carrier. Although referred to as locking-rollers, the action is never totally locked. In the firing position, inclined surfaces on the bolt carrier lie between the two rollers on the bolt head and force these rollers into recesses in the barrel extension. After ignition, the rollers are cammed inward against the bolt carrier's inclined planes by rearward pressure on the bolt head. The bolt carrier's rearward velocity is four times that of the bolt head. After the bolt carrier has moved rearward 4mm, the rollers on the bolt head (which has moved only 1mm) are completely depressed, pressure has dropped to the required levels of safety, and the two parts continue their backward movement together.

Only 19 stamping operations are required to fabricate the HK system receiver. The receiver is grooved on each side to guide the bolt carrier and firmly seat the buttstock group. The barrel is press-fit and cross-pinned into the receiver. A tubular extension, which lies above the barrel, is welded to the receiver. It holds the cocking lever and the bolt carrier's forward extension. The retracting lever moves in a slot cut into the left side of this extension and can be held in the cocked position by a notch at the rear. As the recoil spring is made of thick stock, cocking resistance on the MP5 and HK94 is greater than that encountered on other submachine guns. The recoil spring guide rod, attached to the rear of the bolt carrier, mates to a plastic buffer in the buttstock's end cap.

The trigger mechanism is similar to that used in the FN FAL. When set on "0" or "S" (safe), the selector lever's spindle prevents all upward movement of the sear and its nose cannot drop out of engagement with the hammer's notch. When put on "1" or "E" (*einzeln* = single), pulling the trigger will rotate the sear down and out of the hammer's notch. When the hammer rotates forward, the sear slips forward and its end drops down off a fixed step.

In recoil, the hammer is rotated back by the bolt carrier and catches the sear's nose, pushing it back in contact with the fixed step. After the bolt closes again, the auto sear releases the hammer, which is then held by the sear. Releasing the trigger allows the tail end of the sear to rise



Heckler & Koch MP5SDA3, suppressed submachine gun with retractable stock.

and move onto the fixed step. Pulling the trigger again will repeat the process. When the selector lever is set to "F" (full auto), its spindle allows the sear's tail to rise so high that the sear's nose does not engage the hammer notch at all. The hammer is thus held by the auto sear only. As soon as the bolt carrier moves completely forward, the auto sear is released and the hammer set free.

Burst controls are also available. They consist of an intricate ratchet-counting device fitted to the trigger mechanism which holds the sear off the hammer until the allotted number of rounds have been fired (usually three). The device ensures that only the correct number of rounds is fired in a single burst; any interruption starts a new count. After each burst the trigger must be released to reset the counter at zero.

The first submachine gun based on this method of operation appeared in the early 1960s and was called the HK54. This early gun had a flip-type rear sight positioned forward over the magazine well. The barrel had cooling ribs and two lateral slots cut over the muzzle to serve as a compensator. The forearm had cooling slots cut into it and the bolt carrier was longer and heavier than current models.

By 1966, the Heckler & Koch submachine gun had emerged as we know it today and was renamed the MP5. The muzzle brake and cooling ribs were eliminated and external lugs were placed near the muzzle to accommodate a blank-firing device and grenade launchers of both the ballistite and bullet-trap types. The rear sight was relocated to the aft of the receiver and became the rotary-aperture type associated with the HK system in general. With various modifications, it is this weapon that is currently in police and military service in West Germany, Switzerland and the Netherlands, and is under consideration for adoption

by law enforcement and armies all over the non-communist world. When the SOF training and observation team went to El Salvador earlier this year an MP5 was Bob Brown's arm of choice for vehicle use and personal protection.

It should be noted that rotation of the rear sight on both the MP5 and HK94 will provide apertures of different diameter — and different light-gathering capacity — only. Elevation remains constant. Elevation adjustments are made by insertion of a special tool with catch bolts into the rear sight cylinder to mate with the cylinder's two splines. The sight cylinder is then rotated in the desired direction. The tool also contains a Phillips head screw driver used to loosen the lock screw and turn the windage adjusting screw: a laborious task. However, once zero adjustments have been performed there is little requirement for continued sight adjustment of a submachine gun. The protected front-sight post is not adjustable.

The MP5 is available in a number of configurations. The MP5A2 is fitted with a fixed buttstock. The MP5A3 features a retractable stock. (The stocks are interchangeable.) In 1976 the MP5K was introduced: Designed for clandestine operations, the barrel was shortened from 8.85 inches to only 4.5 inches. The tubular extension above the barrel was also shortened. A vertical fore-grip has been added and the bolt carrier shortened. There is no buttstock, only a receiver cap. The rear-sight apertures have been replaced with open notches.

The MP5SD is the suppressed version of the MP5. The barrel has been ported and surrounded by a tubular casing. Escaping gases diverted through ports drop the projectile's velocity below the sonic level before it leaves the muzzle. The muzzle blast's sound level is reduced by a helix within the casing which increases the gas volume and decreases its temperature. While not as effective as the sophisticated Sterling L34A1, it is maintained with ease. ❧

HK94-MP5

With the exception of its 16.2-inch barrel, the new HK94 is pretty much an MP5 look-alike. As with all the civilian versions of HK weaponry, the flapper-type magazine catch release has been replaced by a push-button located on the right side of the magazine well. This modification has been incorporated to prevent installation of the full-auto military trigger-housing group. The MP5's trigger-housing is a two-piece synthetic molding. Only the HK94's pistol grip is plastic. The trigger guard and mechanism housing are made of stamped sheet metal. The trigger mechanism itself lacks an auto sear. The selector lever has only two positions, "O" and "1." The HK94 bolt carrier has been milled to prevent engagement of the auto sear. Unauthorized conversion of the HK94 to selective-fire operation would be difficult, time-consuming and potentially dangerous. It will also void the warranty.

The exterior finish used on the HK system is baked enamel. The exact hue will vary from weapon to weapon. The HK94 tested was matte black, while the MP5 was a lighter charcoal gray.

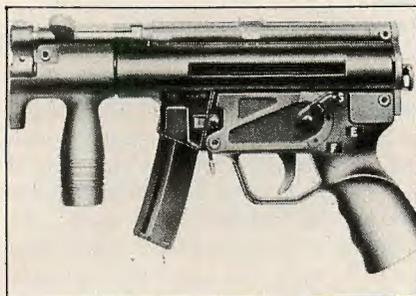
MP5/HK94 magazines come in two capacities, 15- and 30-round. They are of the modern two-position-feed type. They are well-made and the floor plate is held securely in place by two side tabs (although it is a bit more tedious to disassemble than more conventional designs). Early magazines were equipped with plastic followers but more recent followers are steel. The original magazine was a straight box. Feed problems with some lots of ammunition encouraged a change in 1977 to a curved magazine. MP5 magazines are difficult to load by hand. However, an efficient magazine loader-unloader is available. Also offered is a clamp which holds two magazines. But it interferes somewhat with the left arm when firing the weapon.

H&K introduced a .22LR conversion kit for the MP5 in 1970. It consists of a sub-caliber barrel insert, bolt assembly and special 20-round magazine. After insertion, the .22LR barrel is retained by a flexible detent. The bolt assembly does not have locking rollers. The special magazine has the external configuration of the standard MP5 9mm magazine. With this unit installed, the MP5 will operate by pure blowback in both the semiauto and full-auto modes with a cyclic rate of 650 rpm. I doubt this kit will ever be marketed in the United States, as it would provide criminals with an easier avenue for illicit full-auto conversions.

A combat carrying sling is available and it can only be described as awesome in its complexity. Attempting to use and install this German cat's-cradle is quite beyond my pea-brain. A bent sheet-metal

eyelet clip (riveted to the left side of the so-called target forearm on the HK rifles and to the left side of the magazine well on the MP5 and HK94) is supposed to be involved in its use. But the how is never explained. The MP5 manual devotes four pages of illustrations and one page of instruction to this maddening device. It's not enough. An entire booklet devoted to this one topic would be required. Or, better yet, you can simply lay this Teutonic straitjacket aside forever, as I have done.

Any optical equipment that can be attached to the standard HK clamp mount can be used on the MP5 and HK94. This includes night-vision units of the infrared or starlight varieties and an aiming projector which emits an intense narrow beam of light along the line of fire, powered by a 55-watt halogen lamp. This latter device can be used to both locate and temporarily blind targets.



Heckler & Koch MP5K submachine gun is designed for clandestine operations. Note single open notch rear sight on this particular variant, vertical foregrip and absence of buttstock.

Three conventional telescopic sights are available: the Zeiss 1.5- to 6-power variable, the Schmidt & Bender 4x25 and the Hensoldt 4x24. The Zeiss scope is too bulky for use on a submachine gun. We were provided with the excellent Hensoldt 4-power scope for our test. The reticle pattern is that used by the German military since World War I. It consists of a single, thick, pointed post at the bottom of the field of view with horizontal side bars and stadia lines. Although never popular in this country, this format excels in subdued light and offers faster target acquisition than standard crosshairs. It's a formidable combination when mated to the closed-bolt-firing MP5 and HK94.

Everyone agrees that firing from the closed-bolt position offers inherently higher hit potential than that obtainable from submachine guns which fire from the open bolt. When the heavy bolts utilized by most pure blowback SMGs fly forward and then stop violently against the chamber, accuracy is bound to be adversely affected. The problem associated with closed-bolt operation has always been that of "cook-off." When barrel temperatures greater than 250 degrees Centigrade are maintained for more than a minute, premature ignition of the car-

tridge becomes possible. There has always been a great deal of speculation about the MP5 in this area.

More than 3,600 rounds have now been fired through the two test weapons — an MP5 supplied by John Gannaway, president of Arizona Police Equipment, Inc., and an HK94 furnished by Heckler & Koch. I tried my damndest to get the MP5 to cook-off, firing as many as seven magazines in rapid succession and then setting the weapon in the broiling desert sun with a loaded round in the chamber. I could not induce cook-off in the MP5 under any remotely realistic set of circumstances. However, the receiver's chamber area got righteously hot in the attempt. If you are accustomed to holding the palm of the support hand back against the magazine well and under the chamber area, a first-degree burn will be your reward.

As the blowback action is retarded by the two locking rollers, a much lighter bolt assembly is possible. The MP5, with retractable buttstock and without magazine weighs only 5.6 pounds. The trade-off here is a higher cyclic rate, which approaches 750 rpm — close to the level at which full-auto hit potential falls off sharply from excessive muzzle climb. In the semiautomatic mode, the MP5 and HK94 are hard to beat. In full auto, I must go with the heavier guns and lower cyclic rates.

The MP5 and HK94 are not ammunition-sensitive. A wide variety of ammunition was fired during the test and evaluation: Winchester Silvertips, Remington jacketed hollow points, Czech, FN and Yugoslav surplus and reloads consisting of 124-grain cast bullets and the Hornady jacketed/truncated-cone projectiles backed by 5.0 grains of Unique. After 2,000 rounds had been fired through the MP5, without any cleaning, eight rounds of the Yugoslav ammunition (notorious for their hard primers) received light firing pin hits and failed to ignite. The barrel extension locking recesses were found clogged with debris. This is a Herculean performance by any standard and the MP5 and HK94 will pass anyone's test for reliability. Extraction is not nearly as violent as that of the Heckler & Koch rifles.

Surprisingly, the sturdy H&K retractable stock proved to be as stable a firing platform as the rigid stock. Its use on the HK91 (7.62mm NATO) rifle is not as pleasant an experience.

Lightweight, innovative, sturdy, reliable, well-balanced and supplied with useful accessories, the MP5 and HK94 warrant serious consideration by their potential users. The MP5 submachine gun is available to military and law enforcement agencies only. The semiautomatic HK94 is available to all of us. For further information write to Heckler & Koch, Inc. (Dept. SOF, 14601 Lee Road, Chantilly, VA 22021). ☒

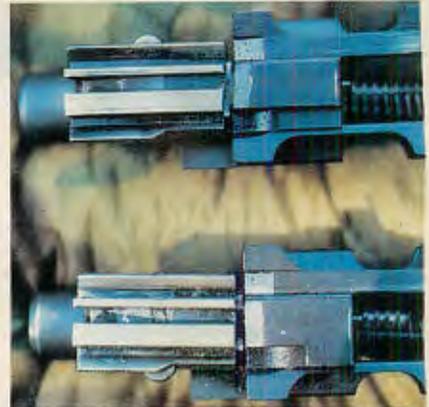
Advanced-design bolt head, carrier, recoil spring and guide rod of MP5.



MP5 (left) and HK94 (right) pistol grips and trigger assemblies: MP5 grip is plastic, while '94 is plastic and sheet-metal.



HK94 bolt carrier (above) is cut to prevent full-auto fires.



To further frustrate illegal auto-converters, H&K makes different magazine wells for auto and semiauto models: MP5 (above) has flapper release that prevents interchange with HK94 parts.

HK94 — MP5 SPECIFICATIONS

	HK94	MP5
Caliber:	9mm Parabellum	9mm Parabellum
Length:		
with rigid buttstock:	34.12 inches	26.77 inches
with retractable buttstock:		
extended:	33.33 inches	25.98
retracted:	26.64 inches	19.29
Barrel length:	16.2 inches	8.85 inches
both six-groove, right-hand twist		
Weight, empty:		
rigid buttstock:	6.0 lbs.	5.4 lbs.
retractable buttstock:	6.2 lbs.	5.6 lbs.
Sights: Fixed front; variable aperture rear; sight radius of 13.77 inches		
Cyclic rate:	N/A	750 rpm
Method of operation: Retarded blowback, roller locked; firing from the closed-bolt position		
Price:		
rigid buttstock (A2):	\$650	\$475
retractable buttstock (A3):	\$720	\$545
Accessories: 15-rd. magazine, \$20; 30-rd. magazine, \$25; cleaning kit, \$21.50; magazine loader-unloader, \$29; magazine clamp to hold two magazines, \$27.90; carrying sling, \$26; telescopic sight with mount, either Hensoldt 4x24 or Schmidt & Bender 4x25, \$699.		

Imported by Heckler & Koch, Inc., Dept. SOF, 14601 Lee Road, Chantilly, VA 22021.



During development, MP5 lost integral muzzle brake to accommodate grenade launcher and a blank-firing device, shown here.

THE LIEUTENANT'S CIB Gong Show Goes to Vietnam

by Curt Rich



IN Advisory Team 70, the regulations stated the combat troops were supposed to get one night at Team HQ in Lai Khe (prior to the fall of 1969 HQ had been in Lam Son, which had a swimming pool and hot water) every month to renew our acquaintance with Jack Daniels and perhaps to go into the village to lower our sperm counts before the hydraulic pressure got too severe.

It was one of those unenforced rules, such as the one that advisers weren't to work "alone," meaning without another American there. But because a normal battalion advisory team had, at full TO&E (Table of Organization and Equipment), two officers and three enlisted men and it was rather hard

to put an adviser with each of three or four companies and the HQ unit and still work in pairs, that one was violated routinely. Whenever one of us got killed then, someone would sadly note, "The poor son-of-a-bitch was by himself and bled to death. Damned ARVNs just ignored him," and the senior adviser would get an adverse note on his OER (Officer Efficiency Report) and be forced to spread out his men the next day, too.

But I was actually getting my night in the rear. All of my troops had gotten theirs. Two of them, in fact, Wyatt and Duke, never came back from their last one, having managed to get reassigned. My battalion

was in a static position as palace guards for 9th Regiment's Artillery (9th Infantry Regiment, 5th ARVN Infantry Division), so I could get my night with absolutely no guilt feelings. (Not that I felt guilty about getting out of combat; I hadn't volunteered for this mess.) It was only two months overdue.

We'd gone into Cambodia in an area *Time* called "The Fishhook." Soldiers never called it that. To this day when I hear someone say he was in the Fishhook, I figure he was in Saigon reading *Time* and drinking Bau Muy Bau before going over to the Star Hill and spending his combat pay. We'd taken in more than 500 men and were down below 400, but we'd gotten more than 20 tons of rice and a couple of large weapons caches as well as enough NVA bodies to keep the ghouls at HQ happy.

We'd been in the swamps so long we had had new uniforms brought in with the semi-weekly resupply Huey, and we'd buried the old ones. They called the new ones sterile uniforms because they had no insignia, no rank, no U.S. Army, but after another month mine was anything but sterile. It would stand up by itself. As soon as I showed up in Lai Khe, one of the field grades saw me and ordered me to get new clothes, so I spent the afternoon with the supply sergeant and a mama-san with a sewing machine.

The rules said you turned in your unserviceable gear, but the supply sergeant balked at my 11-month-old jungle boots. "Gawd, don't give me those ol' boots, Cap'n. Just trash 'em. I'd have to cut 'em up. Cain't you say you lost 'em?"

"Fine, just put 'em down as combat loss along with my helmet, the one with the bullet hole in it I'd planned on taking home as a reminder never, never to do this sort of thing again."

So after three showers, new clothes and a steak (did these guys eat like this every day?), I sat down in Team 70's little O Club to remind my taste buds that just as steak and french fries taste better than ham-and-lima-bean C-rats, Jack Daniels and water tastes better than iodine and muddy bomb-crater water.

I'd been traipsing around in the boonies for 11 months by then, when the average adviser got six months in the boonies and six in the luxury of the rear, complete with nightly movies, beer and young *Cos* as waitresses. (I was told *Co* meant virgin, but I knew better. There weren't any virgins in Vietnam.) It wasn't that I wanted to stay in the bush that long, but I had no use for the rear-area types (REMFs: If you don't know what that means, use your imagination) who were more interested in paperwork than in supplying the combat troops. So I stayed in the boonies as an adviser. By then we weren't advisers anymore; we were Fire Support Coordinators. Supposedly, the ARVNs needed no more advice by then. After we left, this became evident by the way the ARVNs beat the NVA. You remember all the ARVN victories, don't you?

I had a few drinks with Capt. Johnny (real

name) West, a Quartermaster type but unusual in the fact that he'd spent a tour as a tank platoon leader, so he knew what the field troops needed and busted his ass to get it to us. This was unique in Team 70 after the legendary Col. John J. Hayes left. For most of the others it was CYA and politics as usual. Then West got called away for some problem, and I sat there alone nursing my Jack Daniels, looking for a drinking partner. One can't drink alone, after all.

Aha! In came young Lt. Flake (an appropriate *nom de guerre* because he's probably a congressman today and would sue me silly). I invited the young silver bar to sit with me and noted that the left chest area of his sharply pressed fatigues was decorated with the coveted Combat Infantryman's Badge.

Now this on the surface was not surprising. Tens of thousands of these badges were awarded to men who had set themselves apart from most soldiers by being in infantry combat, the worst kind, for a sustained period of time. However, I knew that Lt. Flake had been an assistant adviser to 1/9 for only two weeks before being sent to the rear because (a) he was useless and (b) he had a skin rash.

When he got there, he talked the doctor into a permanent restriction to the rear. Perhaps knowing the good lieutenant's total lack of command skills, the doctor had the Army's best wishes at heart. I don't know. I suspected he wanted to get us all out of combat when he tried to send me to Japan for hemorrhoids. I couldn't see telling my grandchildren I'd gotten out of combat because Vietnam gave me a pain in the ass.

Unfortunately, Advisory Team 70's TO&E did not allow for lieutenants in the rear. Lieutenants were staff advisers to infantry units, intelligence advisers and Armored Cav advisers, all proper combat jobs. The rear was for support troops. The HQ Co. CO was a captain with a distinguished combat record and enough wounds for a temporary profile. Lieutenants eventually became TOC because of a shortage of captains, but only very good ones (like mine, who spent his last four months in that blessed safe bunker after eight in the woods). That wouldn't do for Lt. Flake. He'd probably call in a Cobra strike on BOQ Number 1 with his knowledge of map reading. So an enterprising field-grade type created the non-TO&E job of XO, HQ company. Since this wasn't an authorized position, he was still officially listed as staff adviser to 1/9, and 1/9 did without a lieutenant so Lt. Flake could sleep in a cot with maid service, hot meals, and rum and Coke.

I bought the good lieutenant a drink and, when it arrived, asked him, "How did you get a CIB, lieutenant? You were never under fire and merely sat on a hill for two weeks."

"I was medevacked."

"Medevacked? For what?"

"A skin rash."

"Correct me if I'm wrong, lieutenant. A coveted CIB is given to those brave heroes

who have been under fire in an infantry assignment for more than one month unless wounded first. I know this because I have been in an infantry unit long enough to have impregnated one of these lovely *Cos* like the bartendress here and still be here to name the baby were I so lucky as to get lucky with

one of these innocent lasses. And I still do not have a CIB to call my own through the screwups of S-I types uncounted."

"MACV Regulation [he quoted a number, for Christ's sake!] states that a soldier is eligible for a CIB if medevacked from an infantry assignment."

"Christ, Flake, you went back on the mail chopper!"

The fat young lieutenant straightened at this. "Officially, it was a medevac!"

About then I realized that, of course, awards and decorations would go through an office next to his, so of course he had a CIB. The awards and decorations officer probably got a favor from him in return. His R and R would come on time, and he'd probably get a 30-day "drop" at the end of his tour while we boonie soldiers got to stay our full tours. Such is the life of a rear-echelon "soldier."

"Good lord. Did you perchance get anything else? A Medal of Honor? A virgin sacrifice? Maybe a Purple Heart for the rash? Was it a VC rash?"

"No, but I do have a Purple Heart."

By then Brother Jack was having some effect, so I asked, "How, pray tell?"

"One of my many duties," he began very officially, "as Executive Officer for Headquarters Company, is Rabies Control Officer. This means I have to get rid of all the stray dogs on base..."

"Dogcatcher. I've heard of dog robbers, but..."

"Rabies Control Officer! I shot one with my M16 once and caused a general alert on base, so I was ordered not to shoot them anymore. Since shooting is not allowed on base, I took a bayonet after the next one, and he bit me."

"You don't get Purple Hearts for that, do you? If so, I have some leech bites I'll turn in."

"No, silly. But they sent me to Cam Rahn Bay for two weeks for rabies shots..."

"Really? Are there any more dogs around? Let me get the next one. Will they send me there if one bites me?"

"Those shots hurt!"

"So do AKs, shrapnel, mines..."

"May I continue?"

"Oh, sorry. Certainly."

"While I was at Cam Rahn Bay, we had a sapper attack. When running to the bunker in my shower shoes, I fell and broke the big toe on my right foot..."

"For that they give Purple Hearts?"

"Yes. MACV Regulation..."

"Spare me. Okay. You have a Purple Heart. You're a hero."

"That's not all. When I got to the bunker none of the medics could make the .50-caliber fire. So I cocked it for 'em. The next morning they found a dead VC in front of my bunker, so they gave me a Bronze Star with V device."

Stunned, I ordered another round of drinks. "Gee, lieutenant, I really misjudged you. You're really a hero. For that you deserve a drink." So I poured it on him. ✕

'NAM NOVELIST

Curt Rich finally got his Combat Infantryman's Badge, but in an anxious flurry to get out of the Army, he never noticed that this information was not included on his DD214.

"Some things never change," complained Rich. "What the Army does wrong once, they will do wrong forever. But fortunately, the record of my CIB is in my 201 file."



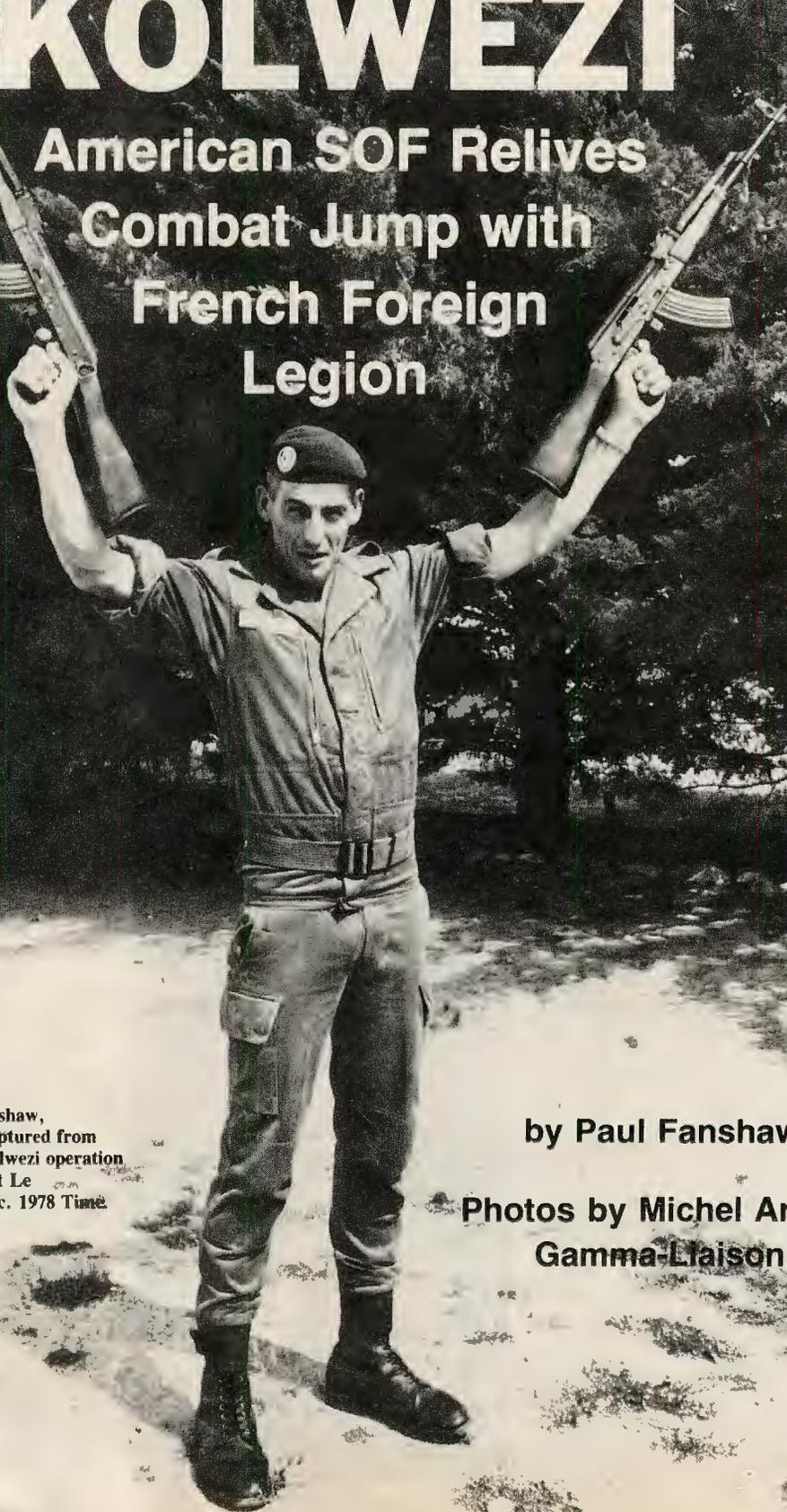
Author Curt Rich left the Army as a captain in 1970. He started his career stationed in Germany, then went on to England until the computer found him and sent him to Vietnam. After stomping the bush for a tour, Rich stopped for a drink at a rear-area officer's club — and found out what real heroism was all about.

Rich was commissioned in July 1967 from University of Houston ROTC, and spent July '69 through July '70 in 'Nam. When we alerted him of the acceptance of his article, Rich was inspired to continue work on his novel about his experience in 'Nam. "I'm spending about eight to 10 hours a week writing on my word processor," said Rich, "and after 13 years, I can finally write about it with all the bullshit removed. The book will concentrate on U.S. advisers in 'Nam. To me, the advisers were the forgotten soldiers of the war."

A Mercedes-Benz salesman, Rich makes his home in Houston. He races cars (1977 Sports Car Club of America National Rally Champion) and is an avid IPSC shooter. We wish him luck with his novel, and readers can look forward to seeing more of Curt Rich's work in future issues.

SOF EXCLUSIVE TARGET KOLWEZI

American SOF Relives
Combat Jump with
French Foreign
Legion



Author, Sgt./Chef Paul Fanshaw, brandishes Soviet AKMs captured from Katangese rebels during Kolwezi operation in May 1978. Photo: Hubert Le Campion/PEOPLE Weekly/c. 1978 Time Inc.

by Paul Fanshaw

Photos by Michel Artault,
Gamma-Liaison

ON 17 May 1978, the French 11th Parachute Division was alerted for intervention in Zaire, and was advised by Army HQ that the 2nd Foreign Legion Parachute Rgt. (2e REP) was to be placed on *Alert Gopard*: Six hours after the order was given, the regiment was to be assembled and ready at its point of debarkation. By late afternoon, the regiment was ready to move from its base at Calvi, Corsica.

At 0130, 18 May, movement orders arrived and by 0800 the majority of the regiment was regrouped at the airbase of Solenzara. A first echelon, which included Regimental HQ, Scout Section, Mortar Section and four Rifle Companies, was designated to fly that afternoon to Kinshasa, the capital of Zaire, aboard five French DC-8s. A second (heavy) echelon, composed of hundreds of regimental vehicles, was scheduled to depart for Lubumbashi on 19 May, aboard U.S. Air Force C-141s and C-5 Galaxies. Both echelons were to meet later in Kolwezi.

In Zaire, the situation was serious. Formerly the Belgian Congo, Zaire gained independence in 1960, signalling the start of a series of wars between political and tribal factions. The principal characters in this tragicomedy were Patrice Lumumba and Moïse Tshombe.

Tshombe, president of Katanga Province (later Shaba, the richest area of Zaire because of silver, cobalt, copper and diamond deposits), attempted secession, supported by powerful Belgian land owners and aided by white mercenaries. After the intervention of U.N. forces in 1963, Tshombe went into exile; however, rebellious tribal and religious movements continued to harass the new nation and the capture of Stanleyville by the Simbas in 1965 required the intervention of Belgian paratroops and European mercenaries. Finally, in 1965, Gen. Mobutu was appointed president.

Mobutu had to face sporadic outbreaks of unrest and disorder between the diverse opposition movements. During this time, Mobutu ordered a few thousand former "Katangese Gendarmes," who aided the failed secession attempt of Moïse Tshombe, expatriated to Zambia and Angola, where they formed the FNLC (*Front National de Liberation du Congo*) under Nathanael Mbumba. The FNLC worked actively to overthrow the government in Kinshasa. Mbumba's recruits came mainly from the Lundas, one of the principal tribes of Katanga Province.

In 1977, an attempted invasion of Shaba by the FNLC was crushed by Zairian and Moroccan troops aided by a few French and Belgian advisers. Kolwezi, capital of the province, was home for more than 2,000 Europeans, most of whom were employed by the GECOMIN copper mines.

On the morning of 13 May 1978, Nathanael Mbumba's FNLC "Tigers" invaded the city of Kolwezi and cut its lines of communication with Kinshasa. Zairian units resisted the invasion and Zairian paratroops, after suffering 60-percent casualties, retook the small airstrip six kilometers from town.

HIRED PEN

Paul Fanshaw is a six-year veteran of the U.S. Army and Marine Corps, and a 12-year veteran of the French Foreign Legion. Paul joined the Legion in 1970. After basic instruction he was assigned to the 3rd Co./Foreign Legion Operations Group stationed at Bonifacio, Corsica. He remained there until 1972, when, as a corporal, he volunteered for service with the 2nd Foreign Parachute Rgt. (2e REP), with which he remained until 1982. Sgt./Chef Fanshaw participated in the jump into Kolwezi, Shaba Province, Zaire, in May 1978, as NCOIC 2d Plt./3rd Co./2d REP.

Meanwhile, "Tigers" rampaged through the city in an orgy of pillage, rape and murder. Any man thought to be French, Belgian or Moroccan was shot on sight. Native "collaborators" were brought before drum-head courts and shot. The next day, liquor was widely available and things got worse. Women and children, as well as men, were murdered or kidnapped by drunken FNLC troops. Gen. Mobutu requested intervention from France. France conceded. (See "Jump into Shaba!" SOF, February '79.)

During the late evening of 18 May, I

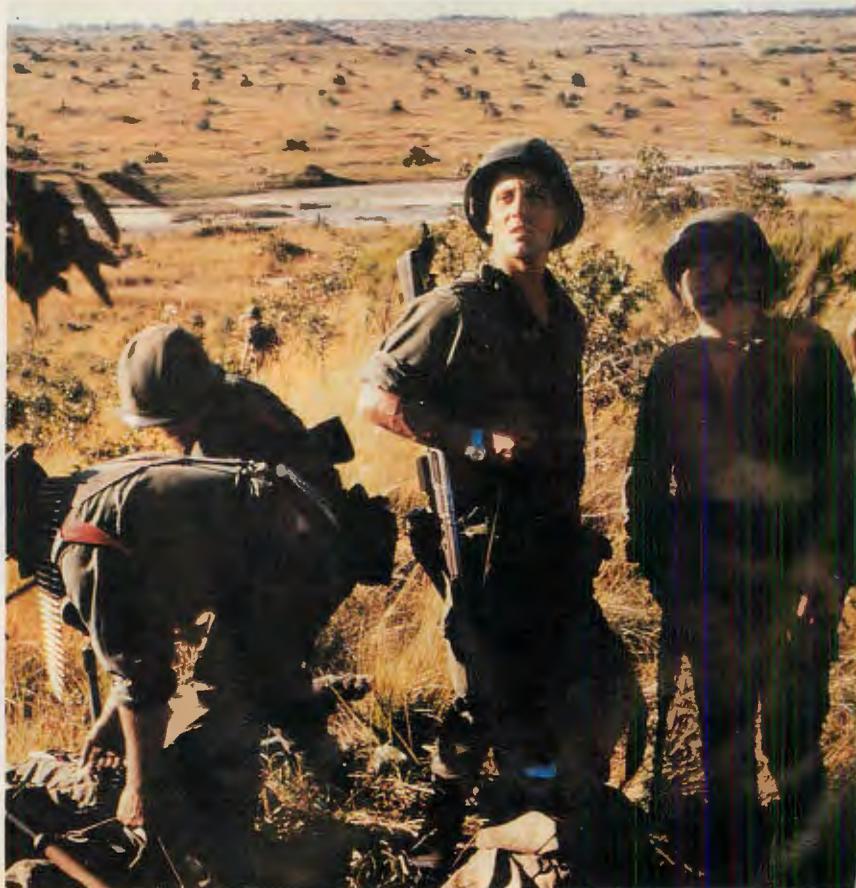
Members of le Section/2e Cie/2e REP look skyward as second wave jumps on D plus 1. Termite hills are in background.

landed with the first echelon at Kinshasa Airport. There we were met by four C-130H and two C-160 aircraft of the Zairian Air Force, as well as a contingent of *Les Berets Rouges*, Regular French Army Paratroopers. Struggling against jet-lag and the high humidity, we off-loaded our gear, formed up on the airstrip and began preparing for our — in the general's words — "humanitarian combat operation." A contradiction in terms, if ever there was one.

We dumped everything out of our rucksacks, threw away the sleeping bags and packed an extra canteen, two ration boxes, poncho and sweater. We received weapon containers, grenades and ammunition. I took four grenades and 200 rounds of 9mm ammo for my MAT-49. There was not enough space aboard the DC-8 for the 3rd Squad, so they were left at Solenzara. I set aside enough ammunition for them when they joined us later.

Shortly, we were approached by five *Berets Rouges*, all armed with M16 rifles. The legionnaires went crazy; everyone wanted an M16. The *Berets Rouges* told us they purchased the weapons from the Zairian troops, who had captured them from the FNLC troops we would soon be fighting. The *Berets Rouges* explained to us that we were going to Kolwezi, 2,000 kilometers away, and that we would be jumping with U.S. T-10 parachutes. We were given a hazy, unofficial situation report that a lot of "Katangese rebels" had invaded Katanga Province and were hacking up women and children. It turned out to be all too true.

The French paras then demonstrated the



finer points of the T-10. After about five minutes of this, I told them to stop: "That's enough. We don't give a shit as long as it opens."

I commanded my section to pick up a T-10 and fall back into formation. This all might sound cut-and-dried, but the exertion, strain, lack of sleep and jet-lag were beginning to tell on everyone. It was now well past 0400, no one had slept and all about us other companies and other armies — French, Belgian and Zairian — were buzzing about. Officers yelled at NCOs; NCOs yelled at the troops; everyone tried to pack, repack and grab the latest rumor.

In this bedlam, Lt. Wilhem — our section leader and unofficial joke of the company — came over with a handful of photocopied papers. Wilhem was notorious for his large collection of duck calls, which he used to drive everyone crazy with his infernal quack-quack-quacking. The CO, Capt. Guasseres, hated his guts.

Holding a flashlight in his teeth, Wilhem handed me four sheets of paper marked A, B, C and D, then using his thigh as a clipboard, he began marking different objectives. I tried to put this puzzle together while Wilhem was stumbling around asking legionnaires for cellophane tape. By the time I got this mess partly sorted out, the sun was coming over the horizon. I assembled the section as the lieutenant returned with our operations order.

From an altitude of 200 meters, the 1st, 2nd and 3rd Companies, with elements of Regimental HQ, Mortars and Scouts, were to make a tactical combat jump on the town of Kolwezi.

Flight Time: Four hours.

Jump Time: 1530 hours 19 May.

Regrouping Point: West end of DZ.

Section Mission and Objective: Occupy area of railroad overpass and prevent passage of traffic into Old Town.

Company Objectives: Post Office, Railroad Station, and Hotel Impala.

Supporting Units: 1st Company will occupy Jean XIII High School and 2nd Company will occupy New Town, the hospital and the GECOMIN factory.

Enemy Forces: FNLC troops based in Angola, probably wearing civilian clothes; strength, 1,400 to 4,000.

Execution: Get on the ground, leave 'chutes and rally on NCOs.

Service Support: Rations, two meals; water, two canteens; resupply not expected for three days. *Demerdez Vous* (Make do)!

Ammo: The same.

Medical Support: None. Use commando packet. (Every legionnaire has an indi-
2e Sect./2e Cie/2e REP legionnaires on alert for possible ambush. Tire inner-tube forms camouflage band on parachutist's helmet. Men are armed with MAT-49 SMGs in 9mm Parabellum and FSA-49/56 in cal. 7.5mm.

vidual "commando packet" which he wears on his web gear. This consists of a large, double-gauze bandage, morphine and syringe, dexedrine, salt and halazone tablets, plus burn dressing and an antidote for nerve gas.) The lieutenant then mumbled something about radio frequencies but, by the looks on everyone's faces, no one was listening. The "Medical Support: None" hit everyone like a jolt of electricity.

After Lt. Wilhem finished, I added my two bits, "When your 'chute opens, look around and get orientated. Look for the railroad overpass and pull toward it. If someone is on the ground shooting at you, there ain't much you can do about it. Don't go pulling grenades out of your pockets and throwing them groundward: You're liable to kill your own people. Forget about the damn regrouping point, just get your ass over to the objective. We will regroup there. If you get hit, don't go crying for a medic because there aren't any. Bandage yourself and crawl to cover. Don't expect anybody to come looking for you; you're on your own. Any questions?"

There weren't any. Everyone stood there looking at me like kids watching a horror movie. "All right," I said, breaking the tension, "'chute up!"

I 'chuted up last, helping the troops with the unfamiliar T-10s. We had a hell of a time trying to hook the French weapons containers onto the U.S. parachute so we



tied them down any way we could. I saw some of the legionnaires with the AA-52 strapped to their chests. Those guns weigh 23 pounds. And they were carrying 2,000 rounds of ammo each.

These poor bastards were in for a real experience, I thought, and silently counted myself lucky. I obtained a section TAP-5 weapons container and loaded it with two LRACs (antitank rocket launcher) and four rockets. I marked the bag with a black *foulard* (piece of cloth), our company color. Every Legion company had a color code and every member wore a *foulard* of that color: 1e Cie wore green; 2e Cie wore red; 3e Cie, black; 4e Cie, gray; CCS (HQ) wore yellow and CEA wore blue. I then found a reserve 'chute and tied it to the container with some string. The 82nd Airborne Rigger Co. wouldn't think much of this method but it was all I could come up with at the time.

Once things were running smoothly, I took time to make some cold coffee and wandered over to a truck full of Zairian Commandos. These jokers were camouflaged and carried M16s, UZI SMGs and Browning HPs. They were not jumping with us, yet were better-armed: Most legionnaires were equipped with the 10-shot FSA-49/56 and four magazines. After talking with these troops for a while, I concluded that Zaire had more guns than guts.

Our aircraft warmed up their engines. Lt. Wilhem began moving the section in columns of four to the rear of a C-130. I tried in vain to explain to him that the section should be formed into two sticks and loaded in reverse order. The first man on the plane (in this case, me) should be the last one off. He had it just the opposite.

A Zairian "jumper" wearing a yellow U.S. civilian parachute started loading the plane along with two *Berets Rouges*. These people didn't have the foggiest idea how to load a C-130; it was a regular Chinese fire drill. I had considered giving everyone a safety check but that was impossible.

In addition to the general chaos, I had one specific problem: The damn sticks were reversed. Over the revving of the engines, the jumper and I argued back and forth about straightening out the sticks. He finally agreed to give us 15 minutes before jump time to get people rearranged.

Jesus, I thought, how the hell am I going to reverse the damn sticks in flight? We originally had 66 jumpers, but on takeoff one C-160 blew a tire and the troops were told to un-ass and get on the other planes. In the transition, we picked up 14 extra men. We were packed in like sardines.

The engines increased RPMs and the plane lifted off. The heat was suffocating and we fought sleep. Pulling my canteen full of coffee out of its case, I took a big swig and offered it to Capt. Thomas, behind me, and Capt. Quiniou, both of whom accepted gladly.

Taking off my helmet and leaning back, I closed my eyes and tried not to think about my predicament. The ride was pure torture:



2e Cie/2e REP sniper armed with FR-F1 (*Fusil a Repetition Modele F1*) bolt-action sniper rifle in 7.5mm with M1953 3.8-power telescopic sight.

80 combat-laden paratroopers were packed into a 66-jumper aircraft — with which they were not familiar — wore strange 'chutes and were expected to descend on an enemy force that outnumbered us five to one. Everyone looked anxious.

A few hours into the flight, one of the French jumpmasters gave the 20-minute warning. When I told him I wanted to reverse the sticks, he gave me the go-ahead. Everyone stood up, tried to raise the seats and fell all over each other. After being crammed in for four hours, their muscles

Members of 2e Cie/2e REP five days after jump wear red *foulard* and carry PA50 pistols and 63s.



were contracted and they hung on to each other like children in the dark, trying to keep their balance. No one was familiar with the C-130, and they couldn't find the damn buttons to raise the seats. I got the seats up on my side and Capt. Thomas attempted the same on the other.

By pushing and shoving, I finally got my stick reversed, but Capt. Thomas couldn't manage. The doors opened and the wind rushed in, people hooked up and moved toward the door. Some of the legionnaires on the inboard stick hooked up on the outboard cable; others didn't know what in the hell to do. It was the worst in-plane clusterfuck imaginable. I screamed at my people to let the outboard stick jump first, but I got the feeling some people thought they were supposed to alternate going out the door.

Finally, the sticks started to move up, but those standing on the other side of the air-

craft had one foot on the seats and the other on the floor while some were wedged in so tight they couldn't get up.

Looking out the window, I saw nothing but bush for miles; then some houses came into view. The plane made a steep bank and two dozen legionnaires fell on their asses. The jumpmaster moved the weapons containers to the door. The red light came on.

Reaching into my breast pocket, I pulled out a little bottle of Johnnie Walker and took a long swig. I gave the remainder to Sgt. Marques, a Portuguese, pointed to the label and said, "Johnnie Walker whisky, 100-years-old and still going strong."

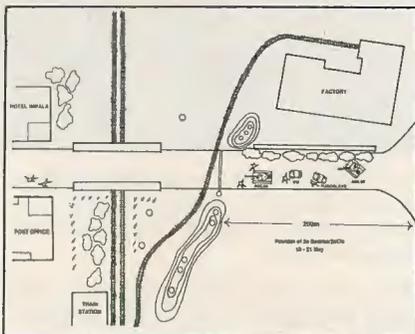
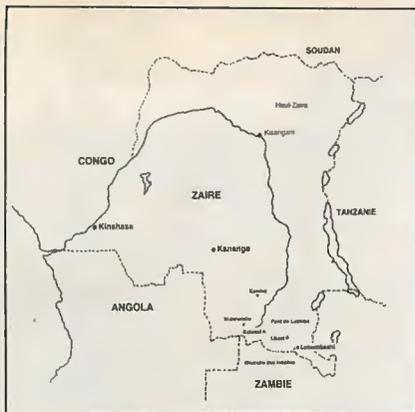
He grinned back at me and replied, "May we live so long!"

Green Light. Jumpers tumbled out the doors and, for a few seconds, I could breathe. The plane dipped and quaked and, while butterflies kicked in my stomach, I pushed legionnaire Misse, who could hardly walk because of the weight of his machine gun and other gear. On my left, entangled legionnaires fought to tear themselves away from their seats.

We fell out the door simultaneously: feet, sky, earth, sky, shock. The big American 'chute popped open! All around me billowed green 'chutes; under me, a large cluster of houses stood. My rate of descent told me that my 'chute was okay, so I didn't waste time checking it. After unhooking my reserve, I pulled the fork on my quick-release. I was going to get out of this 'chute fast.

In the distance, I heard a few rounds of .50-caliber MG fire, then everything was quiet — neither soldiers nor civilians moved on the ground. My eyes searched futilely for the overpass but, seeing some railroad tracks, I pulled on my two forward risers to change my direction of descent and land as close to them as possible.

I plowed in 400 meters in front of the Impala Hotel. We missed the whole damned DZ by a full kilometer. Misse landed about 40 meters away, dropping onto the street like a bag of shit. Off to my right, I saw a destroyed Panhard AML-90 that had run off



Position of 2e Section/3e Cie 19-21 May 1978.

the road into a tree. I got up on one knee and slapped the quick release with my fist. In a second, I was out of the 'chute, struggling with my sack and weapon; then I ran like hell toward the railroad tracks. I waved Misse to follow.

Everywhere legionnaires hung from trees, like oversized Christmas ornaments.

2e Cie/2e REP, identified by red foulards, dismount from requisitioned civilian truck to begin sweep. Legionnaires are equipped with (foreground) PP-13 radio and U.S. Combat Knife; (center) FR-F1 Sniper Rifle in 7.5mm and offensive grenade OF 37; (left) FSA 49/56 in 7.5mm and portable PP-11 radio.



Sgt. Roussel, Cpl. Yanci, Leg. Sola, Cpl. Tessier, Moran and Sgt. Marques were all over the roofs and in the trees. I quietly thanked the big American 'chute for giving us so few casualties.

After running about 100 meters, I stopped to orientate myself and discovered I was standing on the overpass. We may have missed the DZ, but we landed right on our objective.

To the right of the overpass was an embankment about one meter high with a field-of-vision extending 200 meters to our front, at the end of which was an intersection of two streets coming out of New Town. The railroad segregated the Europeans in New Town from the black population in Old Town. Up from the intersection, in our direction, sat the destroyed Panhard armored car, then a brick wall about two meters high extended up to the railroad. Directly to our front, on the road, was a barrier to prevent traffic from crossing a railroad track that branched off behind us and led to a factory on the opposite side of the wall.

I placed myself, Lt. Wilhem, the AA-52, a grenadier, our sniper with his FR-F1 and six riflemen on the mound to the right. Sgt. Roussel took the rest of the section and placed them on a smaller embankment on the left. We pulled down the road barrier and took up positions. As I had told my men before the jump, I wasn't going to look for anyone. Six of my men were missing but their whereabouts didn't concern me. I was at the objective, which had to be defended: This occupied all of my faculties.

Armed with two machine guns and one grenadier with nine anti-personnel rifle grenades, we were supposed to block the road. It didn't take a genius to figure out we couldn't do it; we had no antitank weapons. I sent Cpl. Moran off to find our weapons container.

We had been on the ground for about 15 minutes and hadn't heard a sound — no people, dogs or birds. To relieve the tension created by the madness of the last 24 hours, the lack of sleep and the suffocating plane ride, I had the men test fire their weapons. This everyone did in good order. Then we started digging in.

Lt. Wilhem came running up, gesturing with his compass and four-piece map, and told me we were in the wrong place. "The hell we are," I replied. "This is the right place and we aren't moving. Besides, this embankment is good protection."

He shrugged his shoulders and wandered off, turning his pieces of map this way and that. A few minutes later, we saw him standing on the railroad track, helmet on head, trying to shoot an azimuth. Marques turned to me and said, "Quack-quack; quack-quack!"

Cpl. Moran returned at a run carrying an LRAC, which was great except he didn't have any rockets. I told him to leave the LRAC in place and go find the rockets. None too soon, either, for from New Town the sound of armored vehicles carried up the street to our ears.



We gripped our weapons and crouched behind the embankment. Cpl. Moran, clutching two rocket tubes, jumped back into position, and tore at the tape on the circular carton. I tore at the other. To our front, gears grinding, appeared the first of three Panhard armored cars. The first one, an AML-60 with a large green flag flying, moved around the corner of the intersection about 100-meters distant, slowed to change gears, then headed straight toward us at high speed.

Slamming a rocket into the LRAC and rolling to one side, I screamed, "Fire!" I glanced over the embankment: The first AML was only 50 meters away, its short-barreled 60mm mortar aimed straight ahead.

"*Nom de Dieu,*" I yelled, "Fire, fire! . . . *Bordelle de . . .*"

CRASH! The launcher barked and the rocket smacked into the vehicle's turret. The AML came to an immediate stop and its driver, dead, fell out of the side door.

Seeing this, the second AML stopped, reversed gears, fired a 90mm round in our direction and headed back the way it came. I couldn't get another rocket off fast enough to track him, but both MGs plastered him with bullets and my grenadier fired a well-intended rifle grenade in its direction. The third AML, which had just entered the street, quickly reversed and followed the second one back to New Town.

Just then, the turret hatch of the destroyed AML flew up and the commander jumped

2/2e sweeps through termite-infested field west of GECOMIN (*Generale Congolaise des Minerais*) copper mine.

81mm mortar crew attached to CCS/2e REP identified by yellow foulard. Legionnaire at left carries MAT-49 SMG and PA50 in holster, French defensive grenade DF37/46 hangs on U.S. web suspenders; legionnaire in center carries FSA-49/56 in 7.5mm; legionnaire at right has FN FAL in 7.62mm NATO and M1917 trench knife.

out and ran hell-bent for the brick wall under a hail of lead. I fired three or four short bursts at him but he reached the wall and dived over. "My God," I mumbled, "that man must be saying his prayers."

Immediately, I heard the captain shouting, like a mad man, "*Arret le feu! Arret le feu!* Stop shooting, stop shooting! You just blew up a friendly tank!"

The CO raised hell, chewing my ass and screaming at Wilhem, then stomped off.



Perplexed, I went over to Lt. Wilhem and asked him about our mission. "Are we or are we not to stop all traffic and personnel from passing this point?" I asked.

Wilhem didn't answer.

Sgt. Roussel came over and told me he had Legionnaire Larouche fire an antitank rifle-grenade from his FSA at the second AML. The first AML, he said, had fired one 60mm-mortar round over his group and a burst of machine-gun fire that had nearly hit Misse.

"If this is a friendly group, I sure as hell don't want to meet the hard-core types," I told Roussel. Wilhem agreed. If they were part of the Zairian Army, then they must be in cahoots with the FNLC.

"To hell with the captain," I said and moved back to my position.

Our orders were to stay where we were for the night so I borrowed an entrenching tool and scooped a hole in the sand. Meanwhile, I learned that the rest of our regiment wasn't jumping until the next day. Small-arms fire sounded all around us, but I had no idea what anyone was shooting at because it was starting to get dark and I couldn't see a thing. The 3rd Section under Adj. Ivanov had taken the railroad station and found box cars full of 81mm mortar shells. The 1st Section, under Lt. Bourgain, was off to our right.

All in all, we were in for a good night: shooting all around, only one rocket for the LRAC and only our ponchos to protect us from the cold. Knowing there was no way in hell I was going to get any sleep, I popped

some dexedrine. Just how tired I was became apparent — even with the "dex," I started to nod off.

Later, the street lights came on, bathing us in an eerie luminescence. There we were in the middle of a blood-bath and the street lights came on. Lt. Wilhem pulled out his pistol and popped away at the lamps close by. He kept this up until a message came over the radio from Col. Erulin to "find the goddamned idiot who is shooting in the direction of the hotel!"

The Impala Hotel was Regimental HQ. Lt. Wilhem got the message and was holstering his pistol when a monkey came hopping up the road. Wilhem blasted away at the damn thing at near point-blank range. The wounded monkey lay on the ground, crying like a baby. The legionnaire next to me climbed out of his hole and angrily administered the *coup de grace*. He returned, muttering, "*Notre lieutenant... petit morveux*. Our lieutenant... little jack-off!" I thought he or another of the angry legionnaires might blow the lieutenant away.

Lt. Wilhem took Cpl. Yanci and four other legionnaires and reconnoitered the railroad yard. Yanci returned with three cases of U.S. hand grenades. We opened up the boxes and assembled the grenades. Each man got four or five grenades and was told to straighten out the pins and place the gre-

Legionnaire holds rebel suspect against wall in Kolwezi.

nades beside his hole. Listening to the small-arms fire all around us — except to our direct front, which was quiet — I was certain that we would be hit with another armored attack.

About 2200 hours, 3rd Section radioed that a Volkswagen was flying down the road with its headlights on. By this time, I could hear the vehicle's engine and see its headlights reflected off the brick wall at the intersection. It was headed toward our barrier. At a range of approximately 100 meters, Sola cut loose with his machine gun, another burst came from Sgt. Roussel's group and a stream of tracers lit up the street. The VW stopped dead in its tracks.

A second later, someone opened up on us with an FAL, then an RPG flew over our heads trailing a long flame. In the tracers' light, I could see the driver, dead, at the wheel. Three men who moved around the car disappeared in the direction of the wall. Sola fired up and down the wall about 50 meters behind the car, while I fired a rifle grenade at the spot along the wall where I thought they might be.

Someone was yelling like hell in some African language. I suspected that a group of FNLC was advancing behind the wall, or waiting there to see if the VW breached our road block. I couldn't imagine four people in a Volkswagen carrying FALs and an RPG.

Capt. Gaussenes, with Adj. Ivanov of 3rd Section, radioed to ask which way they went. "They're headed toward you," I warned.



Thirty seconds later, I heard a crash of small-arms fire off to my left. The captain had found what he was looking for.

About an hour later, the sound of an AML engine began moving from east to west about 400 meters to my front, and, for a brief second, I expected to see it appear at the intersection. Instead, it faded out of range off to our left. The next day a legionnaire from the 3rd Section told me his squad lay in a ditch not 10 meters from the road and watched this AML pass, leading six carloads of FNLC troops. His squad leader forbade the men to shoot because he feared the FAL-armed rebels would overrun the FSA-armed legionnaires. It is hard to believe but the legionnaires, armed with FSA-49/56s, carried a basic load of only 40 rounds.

Lt. Wilhem sent three men to search the VW. They found the dead driver's ID listing him as a major in the FNLC and a notebook giving all the details of the attack on Kolwezi, which we later turned over to the S-2 at the Hotel Impala. I pulled four men off the line to reinforce our exposed left flank.

By then, it was cold as hell. Heavy firing raged the rest of the night to our right in the area of Lt. Bourgain's 1st Section. In front of us nothing moved. I forced dexedrine down everyone's throat, but still the men couldn't stay awake. I'd give a legionnaire a "dex," take two steps, turn around and look back, and he would be dozing away. The rising of the sun made us happy, for it brought the second wave of jumpers.

At first light, four C-130s and one C-160 dropped the remainder of the regiment. They landed about 1,000 meters in front of my position on the opposite side of New Town. About an hour later the 4th Cie moved by, on line. They passed the Impala Hotel grounds and disappeared off to our left. A short while later a message came over the radio that Sgt./Chef Daniel, a friend of mine, was dead, shot to pieces in an ambush.

Capt. Habert, CO, Regimental Scout Section, called an airstrike on the enemy retreating in front of the 4th Cie. Zaire's only fighter, a Mirage V, made a pass over the retreating FNLC column but its cannons jammed.

Typical.

Capt. Gausseres instructed Lt. Wilhem to take one squad and make an extensive search of the Impala Hotel. Six French military assistance advisers reportedly were in the hotel when the rebels invaded. I took Sgt. Marques' squad and we left our positions, passed to the rear over the overpass and entered the hotel building. The Regimental CP had pulled out and we searched the hotel room by room. The place was shot to hell — broken glass, dried blood and bullet holes everywhere.

"This was once a fine hotel," I said to Lt. Wilhem, who had a disgusted look on his face.

"Look here," he said, pointing to a row of tables and chairs arranged in a semi-circle, "here is where they held court." In the center of the semi-circle sat an execution



Five days after drop, legionnaires receive first distribution of "war bread" and other rations. However, many men did not receive any rations during entire 17-day operation. Man in foreground carries 34mm M1952/60 AP rifle grenades (nine per bag); legionnaire at left, Mauser 98K rifle.

chair: Its back was almost disintegrated by bullets, its upholstery bloodstained.

The hotel consisted of approximately 40 rooms, all on one floor. We found no one, living or dead, in any of them. Leaving the hotel, we crossed the street to the post office, passing three fly-covered, bloated bodies.

The post office was not in bad shape, only a few of the glass mail boxes had been broken. I walked behind the counter toward the rear doors, observing the M16s, Mausers, FALs, AK-47s, a U.S. 3.5-inch rocket launcher and U.S. ammo cartons scattered about. A white, bloodstained paper bag lay near the rear entrance. Curious, I picked it up and looked inside: It was full of scalps and, from the hair, I knew the victims were European. "Putain de merde," I shouted and threw the bag to the floor.

Exiting the post office through the rear, I bumped into Sgt. Canova, Co. Motor NCO, who was responsible for rounding up enough civilian vehicles to transport the entire company.

"Have you seen the safe, Fanshaw?" he asked. "The big safe in the post office?"

"No, why?" I answered.

"We should take a rocket launcher and blow the door off. It's bound to be full of money," Canova replied.

Noting that I had only one rocket for my LRAC and none for the 3.5, I said, "I'm not about to waste my last rocket on that damn safe."

"OK, maybe later," he replied, "but come over here and see my car."

I rounded the corner and saw a blue Mercedes 280 with all its windows knocked out. It was full of everything: wine, whisky, food, weapons, grenades, ammo. He hand-

ed me five bottles of wine, some food and 300 rounds of 9mm ammo.

"*Demerdez-vous*," he said with a grin, and roared off in a cloud of dust.

I saw Canova a few days later. He was driving around to all the sections distributing food and water. He carried a dead Katangese soldier across the roof of his Mercedes, tied down like a slab of beef. If a legionnaire wanted his picture taken with a dead rebel, Canova threw the cadaver to the ground, pulled out a few FALs or AK-47s and positioned the legionnaire over the body. He charged for the props. Some people can live like a king anywhere.

That afternoon I met four columns of Belgian paratroopers who had airlanded at the little Kolwezi airstrip. One of my corporals was Flemish so I sent him to meet the Belgians and he returned with a colonel. The colonel informed us that the Belgians were there only to evacuate civilians and they had strict orders not to participate in any offensive actions. I noticed his column was loaded with shocked and haggard European civilians.

On the way back to the overpass, I heard a long burst of MG fire. Roussel called me on the radio and told me his men just shot the shit out of a civilian car, killing the driver and seriously wounding the passenger. Both men, he said, were carrying Yugoslav passports.

The captain overheard the transmission and went insane — not that he gave a damn about the bloody human beings dying in the road — but he was afraid someone had made another mistake, like the "friendly" tank. All he was worried about was his efficiency report. After yelling at Wilhem, Roussel and me, he stomped off. I looked at Roussel, then we both looked at Wilhem.

"Fuck him," Lt. Wilhem said as he reached into his pocket and pulled out a duck call. After wiping the mouth piece on his filthy sleeve, he pointed it in the direction of our departing captain and blew: Quaaaaaack!

Continued on page 108

INTERVIEW WITH ADM. ZUMWALT

Former Navy Chief Still Making Waves

by John L. Robinson

Photos courtesy of *Raleigh News & Observer*



Joint Chiefs of Staff in 1973 photo (left to right): Gen. George S. Brown, Chief of Staff, USAF; Adm. Elmo R. Zumwalt, Chief Naval Officer; Adm. Thomas H. Moorer, USN, Chairman of JCS; Gen. Creighton W. Abrams, Chief of Staff, USA; Gen. Robert E. Cushman, Jr., Commandant, USMC. Photo: Department of Defense

THE year is 1970. The United States, in general, and the U.S. Navy, in particular, are receiving a series of ground-trembling shocks from a member of the top brass, a brash young officer who, five months earlier, had been appointed chief of naval operations. His name is Adm. Elmo R. Zumwalt Jr. He graduated from the U.S. Naval Academy and was awarded a Bronze Star in World War II, has just returned from two years in Vietnam, where he has been commander of naval forces and chief of the Naval Advisory Group there.

He knew what the men wanted and he planned to give it to them despite any seismic aftershocks. The policy statements from his office were succinct: booze in the barracks, longer hair and rock music were authorized; "Mickey Mouse" clothing regulations were stopped. *Bang.*

Older vets didn't like this new liberal in high command and let him know it through

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

John Robinson embarked on his journalistic career following a short teaching stint after college. He worked as a reporter for eight years at several North Carolina newspapers before settling at the *News and Observer* in Raleigh. His freelance career eventually lured him away from the buzz of the newspaper office, though, and toward the crashing surf of Virginia Beach.

Robinson says he has always found Adm. Zumwalt an interesting man, and so, while working for the *News and Observer*, he jumped at the chance to interview the admiral, then vacationing in Southern Pines, N.C.

The resulting article is Robinson's first in *Soldier of Fortune*. John, welcome aboard. — Margaret McDonald

letters and public complaints. But that didn't stop Zumwalt, who served four years before retiring in 1974 to write, lecture and, in 1976, run unsuccessfully in Virginia for the U.S. Senate. Now, in 1983, the 62-year-old Arlington resident hasn't stopped making waves: He's just found a different outlet. He has established himself as one of the sharper, more cogent commentators on what has become the most talked-about issue of the 1980s — the military buildup and the concomitant possibility of nuclear war. It is an issue Zumwalt fears could easily go the wrong way for the country.

"President Reagan will be perceived as a man who at the very least gave America the opportunity to save itself," Zumwalt said recently. "It isn't yet clear that America will take that opportunity. If it does, we can regain the kind of national-security posture that will make it possible for us to win the long-term competition that an open society



Adm. Elmo R. Zumwalt in official U.S. Navy photo taken in 1970. Photo: Department of Defense

will always have with a venal, totalitarian system.

"If we don't, my children will grow up in an America which has become a gigantic Sweden. Sort of a North American bovine with an udder stretching into the Soviet Union with two teats — one marked grain and one marked technology — and with its tail twitching happily every time the Soviet Union pulls on one of those teats.

"And my grandchildren will grow up in an America which has become a gigantic Finland, seeking to find out what it is the Soviet Union demands before Moscow demands it. And their children will live in a gigantic Poland. We've got a better-than-50-percent chance to avoid that."

Avoiding that will require the massive military buildup prescribed by President Reagan for the past two years, Zumwalt believes. *Bang.*

Zumwalt doesn't find his description of the future the least bit amusing. He hopes he is not prophetic. He hopes Americans will listen to their elected leader on this issue. He hopes the children of his granddaughter, Thea, will grow up in a free, peace-loving United States, not under the specter of communism as in Poland. And he hopes he is right.

Zumwalt has drawn these conclusions based on his experience as more than a casual observer of the nation's defense policies for 40 years and from military and governmental contacts throughout the globe. He is in constant demand by network television to talk about military strategy and defense needs. And he remains a sought-after writer in foreign policy and military journals and magazines. Although a Democrat, he has Reagan's ear, serving on his transition team in 1980 and having been nominated to the General Advisory Committee, which advises the administration on arms-control issues.

But he casually shrugs off the trappings of celebrity, while remaining an articulate and animated spokesman for a strong defense. Seated in the living room of his huge, white clapboard vacation home in Southern Pines, N.C., Zumwalt cuts a grandfatherly figure. His mood is relaxed and even light-hearted. Sharing the house with his wife and the family of one of his sons has given him the chance to spend more time with his grandchildren, who play nearby on the floor. His consulting firm, Admiral Zumwalt and Associates in Arlington, will have to wait for a while.

Zumwalt looks much the same as he did

when his photograph regularly appeared on the pages of the nation's largest newspapers in the late '60s and early '70s. The wrinkles under the eyes are deeper and the black hair has turned gray, but his famous owlish eyebrows still veer off threateningly toward the sky. At his side is a briefcase filled with papers, reports and books.

Zumwalt's military career reads like a record book. When he was 44, he was the youngest naval officer promoted to rear admiral. At 49, he was the youngest four-star admiral in naval history and the youngest to serve as chief of naval operations. Despite that, it seems significant that the first highlight on his biographical sheet is the Eagle Scout award.

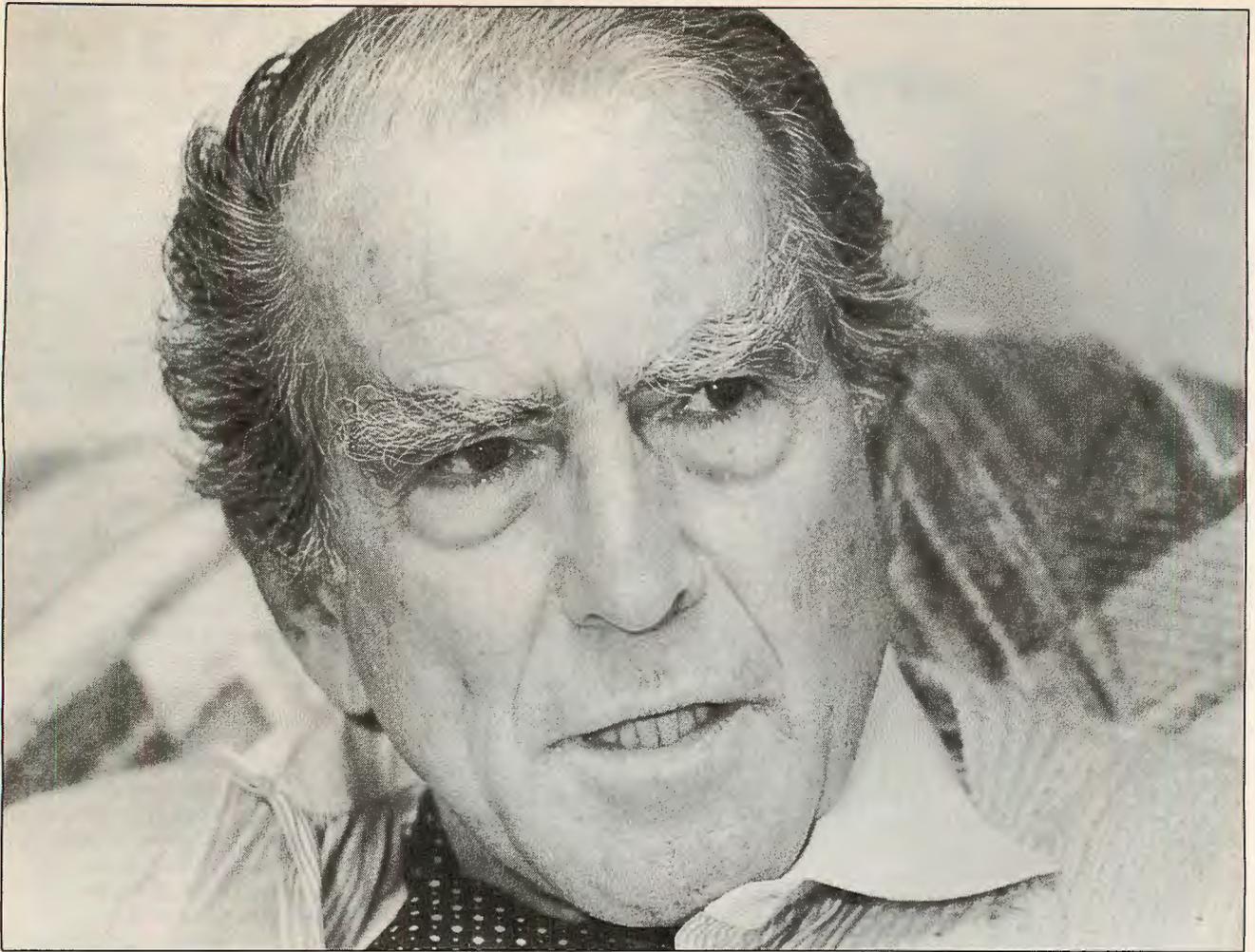
He carries himself with statesmanlike bearing, obviously enjoying the role he has created for himself in national policy-making. His demeanor is that of a college professor. He is not a backslapper, as many of the political types tend to be, but he exudes a warmth that makes him pleasant to be around. At one point, when he was trying to get his granddaughter to smile into the camera, he sat her on his lap, put his thumbs in his ears and stuck out his tongue. A few seconds later, he reverted back to his normal composure with the comment, "I'd better not do that. The camera might catch me."

The frivolity in the air disappears as soon as Zumwalt talks about one of the subjects closest to his heart. He is aware there is a thin line between the town-crier roles of Paul Revere and Chicken Little.

"The Soviets say they intend to have a nuclear-war-winning capability," Zumwalt says earnestly in a soft, authoritative voice. "They do not contend that means they get off scot-free, but they are prepared to evacuate their cities. They have food and water prestocked in outlying villages and towns. They have deep underground shelters able to take a final 15 to 30 percent who may be left behind to man the utilities or keep factories going. They believe they could survive an all-out nuclear war with the loss of 10 to 20 million of their folk. That's a loss they understand. They lost that many in World War II and they slaughtered that many themselves during Stalin's era. So they know the impact of that and they know they can recover from that kind of a loss.

"They have the capability to destroy all our missiles on a first strike whereas we have kept our capability to get no more than two-thirds of theirs on a first strike. We have reduced the continuing radioactivity of our nuclear warheads; theirs are as dirty and poisonous as they could keep them. We have foregone a civil defense; they have developed a credible civil defense.

"One-half of their 308 supermissiles would permit them to destroy all of our ICBMs, all the bombers that don't get airborne — and that would be about 90 to 95 percent — and all the submarines in port. If they limited that first strike to those military targets, they would kill on the order of 10 to 20 million Americans and they would demand our surrender. *The president would*



"The Soviets' preferred choice is for the United States to acquiesce to their expansionism."

then face the option of surrendering or retaliating with the only thing he had left — the missiles and submarines at sea. They would be used against the empty Russian cities and that would kill the 10 to 20 million Russians and their reserve forces would kill 100 to 160 million Americans. So what does the president do?"

Zumwalt pauses for a moment to let the scenario sink in. His question is rhetorical, but he knows the answer. He doesn't like part of it.

"He doesn't let the first strike happen," the retired admiral concludes. "He appeases and that is what has been going on since 1973."

Clearly, Zumwalt believes the United States comes out on the short end militarily when compared with the Soviet Union. He wants to prevent a military power vacuum in the United States that could force the country into Soviet hands.

"We are, in my judgment, in greater danger than we've been in in my lifetime because we have no one standing between us as we did in the early part of my life," he says. "In pre-World War II, England and France were at the front lines and we could be weak without risking our own invasion.

"Today, we would be the first target, and we have greatly increased the temptation for the Soviets to make us the first target by

giving up the capacity to truly deter them. This isn't their preferred choice. Their preferred choice is for us to continue to acquiesce to their expansionist steps under the shield of their strategic nuclear superiority and their conventional military superiority."

The Soviet Union has been doing that for years, Zumwalt says, starting in 1973, a year that will be remembered in U.S. and world politics for a purely non-military event — the Watergate investigation. Zumwalt says it is no coincidence that the military decline started that year.

"In the 28-year period, 1945 to 1973 — from the time we brought Stalin to a halt in Eastern Europe by threatening use of the nuclear bomb to 1973, when we began to be clearly inferior — we were militarily superior," he asserts. "You only find two places on the globe you can color pink — Fidel Castro's Cuba and Ho Chi Minh's North Vietnam.

"But in the seven-year-period, 1973 to 1980, which corresponds to the period of our clearcut inferiority, you have to color very rapidly indeed — South Vietnam, Cambodia, Laos, Angola, Mozambique, Ethiopia, South Yemen and, had Carter been re-elected, in my judgment, Iran and Saudi Arabia."

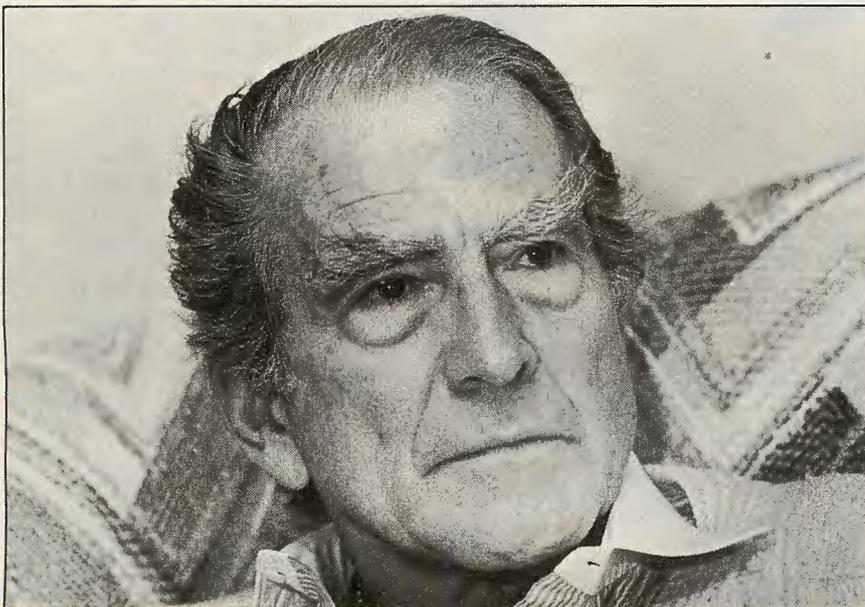
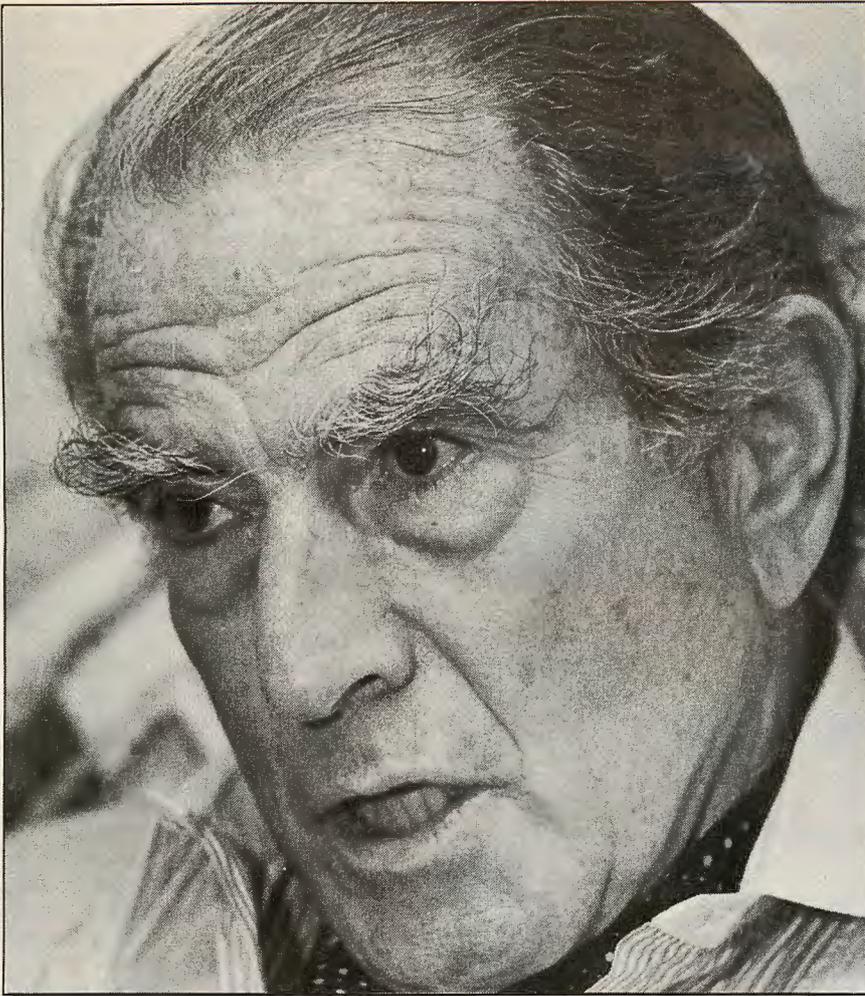
Zumwalt holds a different view on the

Vietnam War than many authors — primarily foot soldiers and journalists — who have written about it. And his view is somewhat surprising. In the early 1960s, when he was a captain working for the secretary of the Navy, he strongly recommended against getting involved in the Southeast Asian country.

"I said then the place to take the stand against creeping communism was Thailand, Malaysia and Indonesia," he says. "When that was overruled and President Johnson decided to get involved, I took the strong stand that we ought not go in land-heavy, but rather sea- and air-heavy and deal with the invasion from the north rather than pretend it was an insurgency and deal with it in the fingertips of the jungles of South Vietnam."

That too, of course, was overruled. "When the truce was finally signed, I took the position that despite everything having been done wrong up until that point, we still had a viable solution. Just as the world has lived with two Germanys and two Koreas, the world could well have lived [with two Vietnams] had Nixon been able to carry out the two secret commitments he made to President Thieu. One, to provide the equipment to replace the losses and two, to react violently in the event of any truce violations.

"He was, of course, politically incapable of doing so by the time Watergate destroyed



"History will teach us that we lost the Vietnam War here — because of the criminal conduct of a president of the United States."

his political base. History will teach us that we lost the war here. Even with all the errors made during it, we had an acceptable outcome that was lost because of the criminal conduct of a president of the United States."

But Zumwalt still thinks the Vietnam

War was a noble cause. Unfortunately, he says, when the country lost the war, "We paid a fearsome price in subsequent tragic decline in United States influence around the world."

But Reagan has the potential to affect that significantly, and actually has changed it to

some extent, he says. The Soviets are more cautious in their actions in Eastern Europe and Central America because of Reagan. But that shouldn't give rise to false confidence. The United States was right, for example, not to assist Afghanistan when it was invaded by the Soviet Union in December 1979.

Zumwalt says the country no longer has the capability to infiltrate Iron Curtain countries successfully because of the stripping of counterintelligence agencies in the post-Watergate era. A military strike also would have been a mistake, he says. "When you're an inferior military power, you should not get involved or you lose," he says simply. "That's what leads to occupied nations, like Germany."

But who says the Soviet Union is more powerful? Some military experts disagree with the administration. Zumwalt ponders that for only a second. He has no doubt the news media are a major obstacle to proper understanding of the issue. "The media has no difficulty, if someone is talking about a cancer cure, in deciding whether or not that is a legitimate medical opinion or if it is a quack and the media will readily label the false practitioner a quack," he says. "The media doesn't do the same with defense commentators." With a smile, he refuses to name those he thinks are quacks.

In any case, Zumwalt says nuclear war is far from inevitable. In fact, he insists it is highly unlikely. "I believe the Soviet Union does not want to lose the 10 million dead they would take. They much prefer to use their superiority as the shield to increase their empire one country at a time."

With that in mind, Zumwalt says, the Soviet Union would attempt to avoid any first strike of the United States primarily because we are weaker. "The Soviet Union believes it will never have to [attack] because it believes we perceive their superiority to be so significant we will not dare force it to an issue. Just as they knew when we were superior that we nevertheless wanted to avoid backing them into a corner from which they had no recourse except to strike and lose."

As an example of that strategy, Zumwalt points to President Eisenhower's decision not to get involved in the Hungarian rebellion because that Eastern European nation was considered of national interest to the Russians and was not vital to the United States.

"When Carter was president they [the Soviets] thought they could get away with just darn near anything," he says. "They'll make their judgments on what sort of mettle they think the president has. But all of it is underlaid with a knowledge that they are a significantly superior power and that any president knows that. They only have to be cautious enough to avoid triggering in each president's mind the perception that he has been pushed to a line beyond which he won't be pushed any further."

Despite being an active member of the party opposing President Reagan, he has



"If America doesn't take the opportunity Reagan is offering to save itself, my grandchildren's children will grow up in an America which has become a gigantic Poland."

met with the president twice, once when Reagan was governor of California and once when Reagan was about to announce his campaign for the presidency in 1979. In both meetings, the two men talked about foreign policy and national security.

After the second meeting, Zumwalt also met with President Carter and came out with a surprising reaction to the conversations. "I found Reagan much better-informed on national security issues than the current president was," he says now. "I believe him to be a very well-informed individual notwithstanding the general perception the media has sought to create that he is a fumbling kind of person."

Although he disagrees with Reagan on the MX missile dense-pack basing plan, he supports the MX as a bargaining chip with the Soviets. "A more sensible, cheaper and survivable system would be to have many mobile land-based missiles with one, two or three warheads in them instead of the 10 warheads of the MX," he says. "If you had several hundred of them, moving around constantly in the empty areas of the United States, they could survive a Soviet strike much better than the MX is likely to survive in dense pack." (For a different perspective on the dense-pack basing scheme, see "MX Peacekeeper," SOF, June '83.)

Zumwalt, who has been an adviser to presidents for two decades, turned reflective when asked about each man. "President Kennedy was fun, exciting and started out totally naive with regard to foreign policy — witness the Bay of Pigs. But he did an outstanding job in personal command during the Cuban missile crisis."

President Johnson: "Powerful, overriding, made heroic domestic *demarches* and a tragic miscalculation in Vietnam."

President Nixon: "I believe history will credit him with being the real strategist in his foreign policy, for which Henry Kissinger has awarded himself primary credit. To my personal knowledge, Nixon was the strategist and Kissinger the tactician. For example, the rapprochement to China was one Nixon conceived and Kissinger did not initially approve. But Nixon was, after all, a massively flawed president."

President Ford: "He will be viewed as a healer, a very decent man."

President Carter: "A highly intelligent and totally ineffective president. He over-managed and therefore failed to perceive the big picture. You can get so bogged down in minutiae, such as the assignment of the presidential tennis courts, that you fail to keep your eye on what the Soviets are really up to."

Zumwalt gave no sign that he was tiring of his topic, but his grandchildren did so he took a break to walk with his granddaughter around the wooded yard of the house. The military tactician had the time to do what he most wanted — and probably what his granddaughter most wanted — because, despite all the troubles in the world, everyone has to take a break once in a while. ☒

URGENT! URGENT! URGENT!

Memo: To all NRA Life Members & Annual Members of five years' continuous membership

From: Robert K. Brown, Editor & Publisher, *Soldier of Fortune Magazine*

Subject: Nominations for the NRA Board of Directors

1. I am tired of the feuding that has been going on in the National Rifle Association during the past three years. This internal squabbling, born of personal ambition, plays into the hands of our enemies: those who wish to disarm us. We must present a united front to the anti-gun nuts, and stop fighting among ourselves. Therefore, I have decided to run for the NRA Board of Directors this year. I urgently need your endorsement if you are a Life Member or an Annual Member who has paid dues for the last five consecutive years. Only by securing a sufficient number of petition signatures from voting members can I guarantee that my name will be on the ballot. The other way to be nominated is through selection by the Nominating Committee, but I am not sure I have the necessary pull with those gentlemen. I need your help. I propose as well the nomination of Major **William Askins**, Colonel **Rex Applegate** and Mr. **Jake Jatras** as like-minded candidates whose election will serve to quell the divisiveness and turmoil which has marred the activities of the NRA

during the past year or two, as well as bring a bit of new blood to the Board of Directors.

2. Each of the *Soldier of Fortune* candidates has distinguished credentials as a shooter and man of action. **Askins**, a Marine pilot in Vietnam and a crack pistol shot, has led an adventurous life around the world. **Applegate**, a renowned author and shooter, served in the OSS during World War II. **Jatras**, a combat pistol shooter, is the U.S. Regional Director of the International Practical Shooting Confederation (IPSC). These guys have the background and character to look after your interests and lead the NRA as it should be led. You know my history well enough: I am plain spoken, will look you right in the eye, and will call it the way I see it.

3. The deadline for submission of the petition is early November, so there is no time to lose. Write me for copies of the NRA petition form. I encourage you to observe the nomination rules attached to the petition form and circulate the petition among your friends who are qualified voting members. We need your signature to win.

4. I also want to hear from you about what the NRA should be doing, if you have had any problems, and how I can improve the NRA, for our mutual benefit, should I be elected to the board of directors.

ROBERT K. BROWN:

Lt. Col. U.S. Army Reserve, Special Forces Team Leader in Vietnam, Graduate Command and General Staff College, military parachutist including jump wings from Thailand, Guatemala and El Salvador, competitive pistol shooter, OIC Advanced Marksmanship Unit, XVIII Airborne Corps, big game hunter U.S. & Africa, author of numerous articles on guns and shooting, arranged for "transfer" of 5,000 rounds of AK-74 ammo obtained from Afghanistan to the U.S. government and turned over first AK-74 rounds to NRA for testing. Founder, publisher, editor and owner of *Soldier of Fortune Magazine*.

WILLIAM ASKINS:

Major U.S. Marine Corps Reserve, helicopter pilot in Vietnam, 17 decorations, military parachutist, competitive pistol shooter, National Record holder in the pistol event of the Modern Pentathlon, author of scores of articles on guns, hunting and shooting, big game hunter and birdshooter, now Executive Director of Game Conservation International (Game COIN), a leading wildlife conservation organization. Former operations officer of the Central Intelligence Agency with 10 years service abroad. Has served as Executive Assistant to the Executive Vice President of the NRA. Well acquainted with the workings of the National Rifle Association. Resident of San Antonio, Texas.

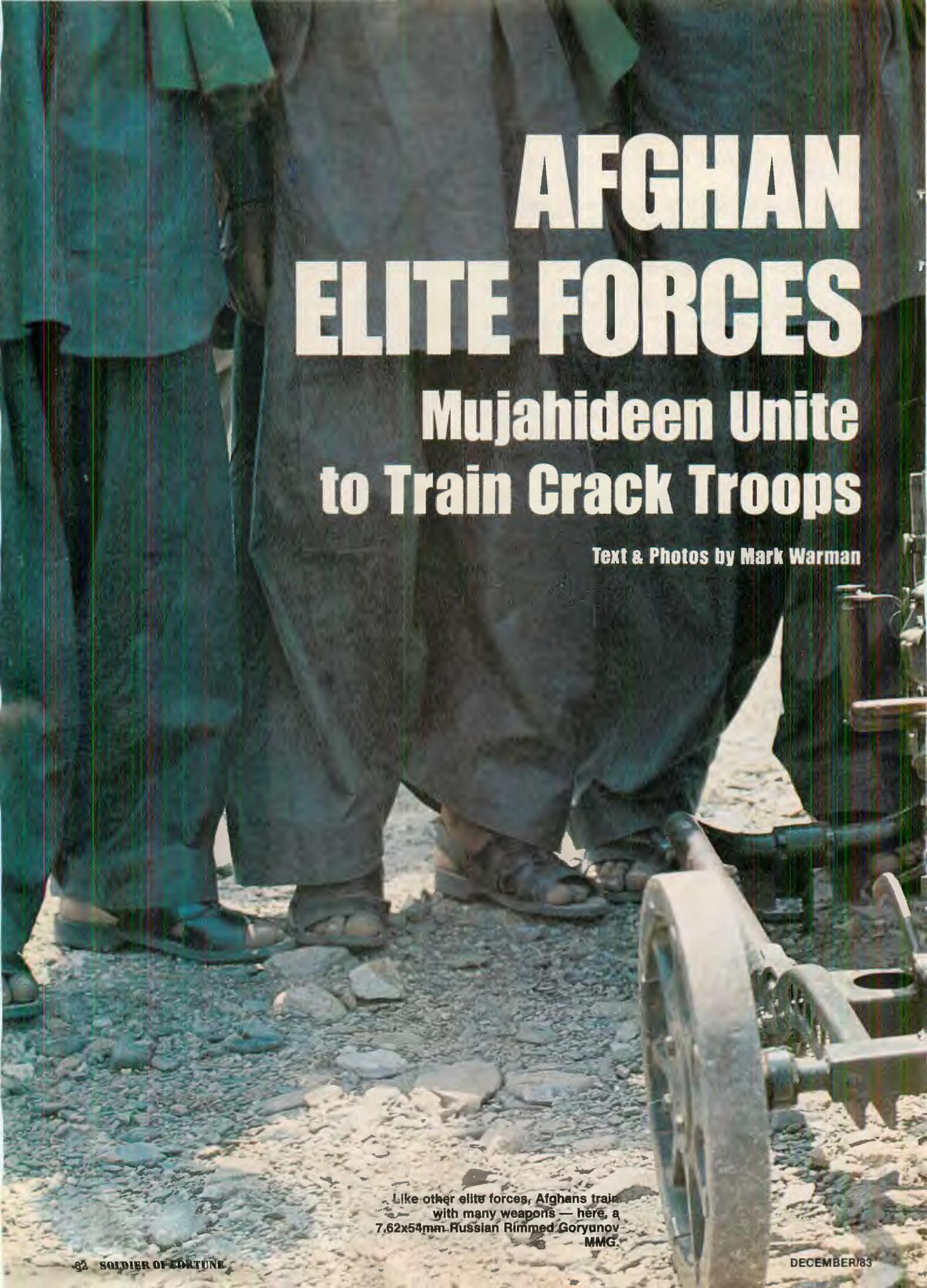
REX APPLGATE:

Scottsburg, Oregon. Lt. Col. U.S. Army Retired, Public Safety Consultant, military and police firearms expert, gun writer, pioneer of police and military close combat and combat shooting techniques. A major in the OSS during World War II and author of *Kill or Get Killed*, *Riot Control-Material and Techniques*, and *Scouting and Patrolling*. He was a famous close-quarter fighting instructor even during World War II and has continued to develop both techniques and tools for police and the military.

JAKE JATRAS:

U.S. Regional director of the International Practical Shooting Confederation (IPSC), co-founder of the United States Practical Shooting Association (USPSA), International Rangemaster of IPSC, managing editor of *Combat Shooters Report*, contributing editor for *Soldier of Fortune Magazine* and *Combat Handguns*, and director of SOF Three-Gun International. He has shot muzzle-loaders for 15 years, combat pistol for 10 years and is a successful private businessman with professional and personal interest in gun legislation.

Call *Soldier of Fortune Magazine* (303-449-3750) or write me at P.O. Box 693, Boulder CO 80306 for NRA petition forms.



AFGHAN ELITE FORCES

Mujahideen Unite to Train Crack Troops

Text & Photos by Mark Warman

Like other elite forces, Afghans train with many weapons — here, a 7.62x54mm Russian Rimmed Goryunov MMG.



THE mujahideen, Afghanistan's freedom fighters, have long been regarded by Western military observers as arguably the most rugged guerrillas in the world. They are committed to their struggle to drive out the Soviet invaders of their country, their morale is high and they are brave to the point of foolhardiness. But what has been thus far lacking is the discipline and sense of professionalism taught to such elite units as the United States' Special Forces and Britain's SAS. Since February of this year, however, a training camp has been in operation where these attributes, together with the more basic skills of unconventional warfare, are now being taught by a man uniquely qualified to do so.

I visited the camp in June under the condition that I would not reveal its location for security reasons, and spent a day in the company of its commander, Mr. Rahmatullah Safi. I was able to observe his training methods and listen to his views on the war. Safi, although he now uses the simple title of "Mister," was at one time Colonel Commanding Afghan Special Forces in the Army of His Majesty the King of Afghanistan. His additional duties included the security of foreign dignitaries who visited Afghanistan. As a former serving soldier he was insistent that I use the correct title for the king when writing this article.

In 1973, he returned to Afghanistan from Hereford, U.K., where he had been on a training course with 22 SAS. He is remembered by one source in the regiment as being "tough as nails."

There is a mountain training area in northern Wales so rough it is known simply as "The Hill." An SAS team was climbing one night when they noticed Safi was missing. It was winter and extremely cold. They found him at the summit, peacefully asleep, covered in frost.

Two weeks after Safi's return, the king was

overthrown by his cousin. Safi spent months in jail before escaping via Iran to Rome where the king was and still is in exile. After some difficulty, Safi obtained resident status in a Western country, which he prefers not to name, and, after making sure of his family's future, has once again devoted himself to service in his country's armed forces. He brings to the war a background of training which few other professional soldiers can boast. As well as his year spent with the SAS, he twice attended courses inside the Soviet Union studying mountain and guerrilla warfare which, although his instructors did not know it at the time, would give him a great deal of insight into the way the Soviet Army functions when they eventually became his enemy. During the Vietnam war, he also attended a "quick kill" course with U.S. Special Forces.

Safi is in overall command of two camps, one of which, an R&R facility, was visible two clicks away across a dusty, rock-littered plain as I arrived at the gates of the training camp which lies at the mouth of a canyon beneath a boulder-strewn hillside. Just inside the gates is a green wooden box containing a Holy Koran in front of which first-time recruits swear allegiance to the *jihad* (holy war). A dusty track runs between two lines of tents and in a narrow defile



RIGHT: Realistic obstacles in Afghan training course include fire. **BELOW:** Training includes weapons likely to be captured, like this RPD LMG and RPG launcher.



"Make do" is the motto of any guerrilla army, and the Afghans are better than most. Here, liberated gasoline (left) becomes the fire bomb thrown at right.



below and to the left of the main camp are more tents. The camp as a whole can hold 400 men, a maximum of 200 men in each of two separate courses.

What Safi refers to as a third course, "Special people for special purpose," is for mujahideen who are already trained. It appears to be more in the nature of briefings for specific targets rather than actual training. It includes sabotage within towns and is carried out in a different location which he was unwilling to reveal. What I did see was the intensive way in which the other two courses are conducted.

The first course lasts for four to six weeks and is concerned basically with weapons training. The instructors, all former members of Afghan Special Forces whom Safi has once again brought together work with recruits on the following captured Soviet weapons: 82mm mortar, DShK 12.7mm HMG, Goryunov 7.62mm MMG, RPG-7 launcher, RPD 7.62mm LMG and the ubiquitous AK-47. There is also training in demolitions and I saw self-igniting Molotov cocktails, shaped charges for cutting pylons and home-made grenades constructed from plastic explosive and right-angle curved piping. Safi believes strongly in using local materials as much as possible, which can more easily be smuggled past unobservant guards into the towns.

A second course lasting a minimum of two months concentrates on physical fitness, survival techniques and close-quarter battle. I watched a demonstration team rapidly scale the side of a mountain, cross from one peak to another by a single rope using mountaineering techniques, then rappel down the cliff to run an assault course under the burning midday sun. A demonstration of unarmed combat followed.

The survival techniques are based on Safi's own experiences in the Afghan Special Forces when he recalls being heli-dropped



"Mister"
Rahmatullah
Safi, CO of
mujahideen
training center.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Mark Warman is a travelling free-lance photojournalist whose home base is Wales. He works to keep such publications as *The London Times*, *The London Observer* and *Arabia Magazine* abreast of the latest in international news.

Afghanistan is currently Warman's special area of interest. In November '82 SOF published Warman's "Kabul's Urban Guerrillas," an overview of the mujahideen's methods, weapons and progress in urban warfare. For this latest report, he went back into the war-torn country to a mujahideen training camp to keep SOFers up to date on these rugged soldiers and their holy war.

—Margaret McDonald

in the mountains and living off the land, marching 25-30 klicks a day and sometimes eating grass to keep moving. Having force-marched with the mujahideen myself, I was gratified to see Safi was keen on ridding them of taboos on what they could eat, especially the crabs found in Afghanistan's mountain streams which the strict Muslims refused to consider, thinking me a touch crazy when I suggested they tasted good.

Few if any of the mujahideen possess map-reading abilities and Safi uses a sand table to great effect when teaching battle tactics. At the time of my visit it was set up to show a section of the Jalalabad-to-Kabul main road and Safi was disappointed that I couldn't recognize the area because I had taken a different route to Kabul last year (see "Kabul's Urban Guerrillas," SOF, November '82).

Safi says, "My basic aim is to make a real man and a tough man with confidence. And I want him to be able to think and do under unusual circumstances. This is most important in guerrilla warfare."

It is this ability of a confident, trained man to use his own initiative which is probably the most important lesson to be learned in any school of unconventional warfare. Safi contrasts this sharply with the extreme orthodoxy of Soviet military thinking. "God gave us eyes, ears and a tongue," he says. "The Soviets are against God and they cannot see, hear or speak on their own. For their soldiers, every thought comes down from the high command. My brain is free to do everything I like, but that Soviet general, even though he may be living well in Kabul, is not free-minded like me."

The Russians have changed tactics two or three times during the war but they still rely almost completely on quantity over quality. Safi is particularly



ABOVE: Traditionally, Afghans built *sanjars*, low rock walls to cover riflemen. *Sanjars* are ineffective against RPGs and artillery, and troops learn to dig in at rebel training facility. LEFT: The only artillery for light troops on the move, mortars — like this Soviet M36 82mm — are studied carefully.



scornful of their misuse of helicopters. They use heli-borne assaults only rarely and, in his opinion, have nowhere near the expertise of the U.S. Army.

It is Safi's belief that a *jihad* waged by a trained army will continue longer and result in increased losses to the enemy, which is why he has placed his considerable experience at the service of Peer Said Ahmad Gailani, commander of the National Islamic Front of Afghanistan. He asked me to write why he had chosen to work with Gailani — "Although I have respect for all who are fighting for the freedom of our country, to me Islam means justice, kindness, mercy and a very good sense of humor. I found Said Gailani is the right man to work with. He is a gentleman, a spiritual leader and belongs to a holy family of Muslims. He is a very good man and a good Muslim."

Gailani's National Islamic Front is one of three main groups which make up the Islamic Unity of Afghanistan Mujahideen under the presidency of Professor Sibghatullah Mojaddedi. The political beliefs of this group are more in line with



LEFT: Graduates of Safi's camp are no longer irregulars, and are reminded of that by formations, gates and painted rocks.

Western thought than the other two main groups: Jamiat Islami and Hezb' Islami, who admire the fanatic fundamentalism of Khomeini in Iran. This basic split within the ranks of the mujahideen has been to the Russians' advantage ever since the invasion.

Recent events, however, demonstrate the insecure position of the Peshawar-based parties as well as possibly lending insight into continuing Soviet strategy.

In March of this year in the Panjshir Valley, a truce was agreed upon between the Russians and Ahmad Shah Mahsood, leader of the Panjshir resistance movement and one of Afghanistan's most popular resistance leaders due to his successful defense of the valley against increasingly severe Soviet attacks over the last three years.

Under the terms of the truce, Soviet troops stay out of all but the first few miles of the valley and, in return, Mahsood agreed not to attack traffic on the main road between Kabul and the Russian border, which runs past the mouth of the valley.

Informed Afghans believe this is just one piece of evidence pointing to the outcome of the peace talks currently under way between Pakistan and representatives of Kabul's communist government. These talks are being conducted through the mediation of the U.N., whose representative has gone on record stating they are 95 percent complete. Afghan sources fear the result will be a *de facto* partition of their country.

As further evidence, they cite that while Soviet forces were used in the recent heavy fighting to take control of Herat in the northwest, the operation to close the border with Pakistan, which has been going on now for 15 months, is being half-heartedly conducted by disaffected government troops. There were reports, too, of heavy artillery and air strikes against the

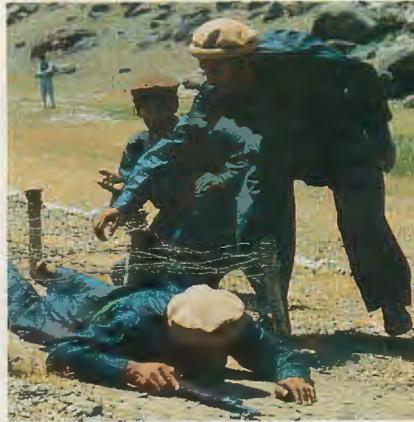


Mujahid begins rope-crossing training low, to perfect technique. Later, he will cross chasms.

RIGHT: Gymnastic obstacle crossings teach teamwork.
BELOW: Regular warfare demands planning: This sand table helps Afghan leaders plan ops.



RIGHT: Low crawl through wire develops skills to penetrate Russian bases.
BELOW: Captured *Dashika* 12.7mm HMGs used with skill and courage will drive off choppers.



villages which line the road between Kabul and the Salang Tunnel, leading some Western military observers to speculate that this may have been in preparation for a Soviet pullout.

On the political front, Pakistan has two main aims, one of which has already been met with the departure from Kabul to Libya of Al Zulfikar, the anti-Zia guerrilla group named after the late prime minister who was executed soon after the military coup that brought Gen. Zia into power. But above all, Pakistan wishes to get rid of the three million Afghan refugees who are an enormous financial drain on an already poor country. There are also fears that the increasingly violent civil war being fought inside Afghanistan between the two fundamentalist groups may soon spill over the border.

In Kabul, Babrak Karmal, the present leader, is slowly being eased out of office. Soltan Ali Keshtmand, the prime minister, represented the Kabul government at the recent non-aligned conference in Delhi and



diplomatic sources say that he is now meeting other communist leaders who come to Kabul even though they request interviews with Karmal.

Exiled Afghans fear a successful conclusion of the peace talks would lead to a phased Russian withdrawal with the Soviets intending to honor only the first phase of the withdrawal. They would pull back to a line running from the northeast down the Hindu Kush mountain range and continuing southwest to the Iranian border, splitting the country in half diagonally.

The refugees, 95 percent of whom come from the border areas in the southeast, could then return home. But this would deprive the various resistance groups, at present based in Peshawar, of their power base. They would be forced into joining a coalition whose make-up of communists, fundamentalists and democrats would be unlikely to achieve peace, thus allowing the Soviets to renege on any agreements to continue their pull-out.

This scenario, if it is correct, leaves the Russians with all the advantages. They can present themselves to the world as genuinely looking for peace, thus muting to an extent the propaganda defeat they suffered by invading Afghanistan. They retain their strategic air bases at Herat, Shindand and Farah in the west and still outflank Iran. Finally, in the north they keep the fundamentalists away from their own volatile Muslim population.

But whatever the political maneuvering, men like Rahmatullah Safi will continue to fight for their freedom. "We have no alternative except to fight," he says. "This war could go for a generation. This is the right of millions of Afghans and *this* is the right of a million millions for the future.

"I'm not saying we'll push them back over the border — but at the end of the day, we'll make them tired." ❧



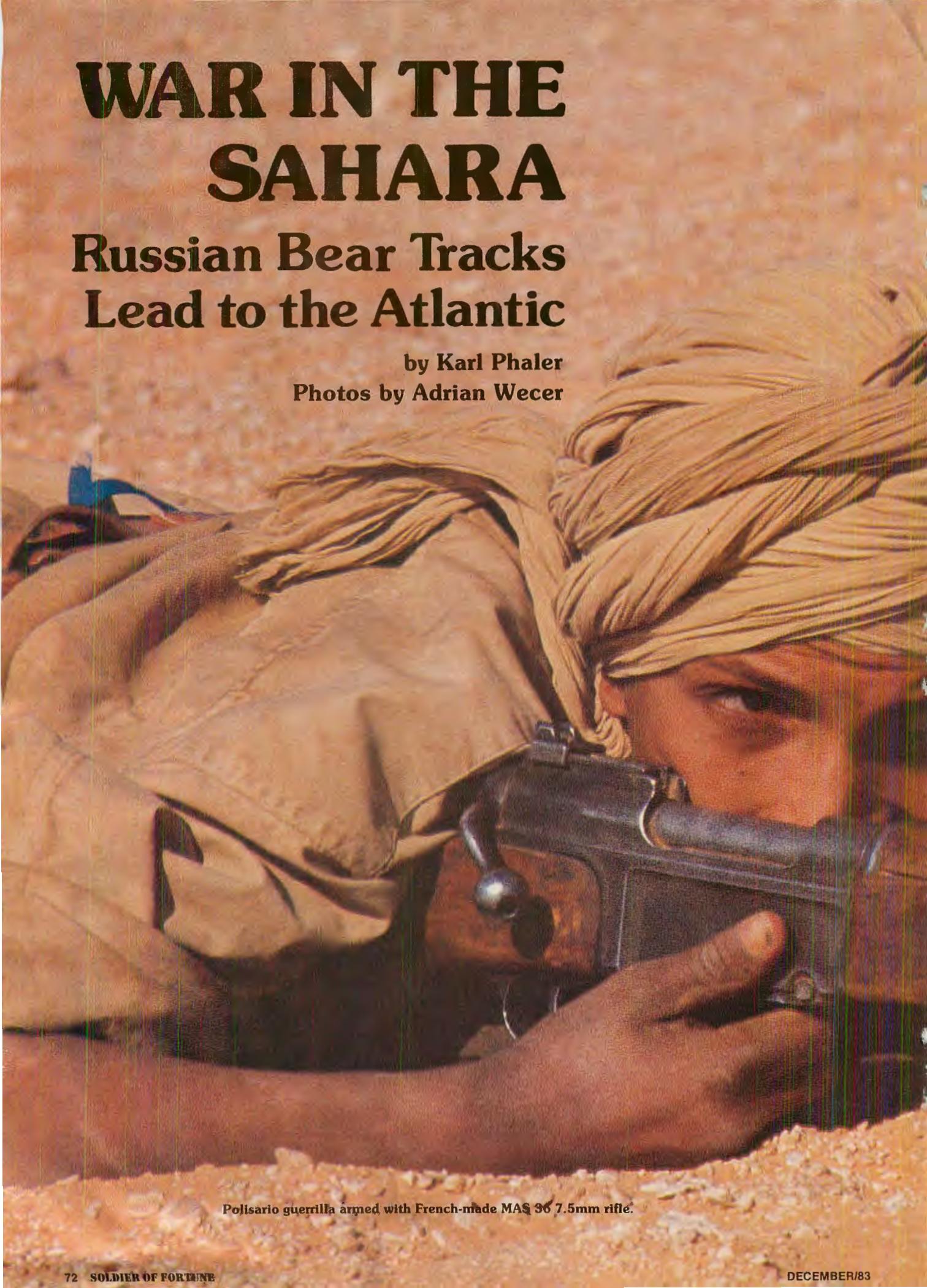


Born to mountains, Afghans did not use ropes until Russian- and British-trained instructors taught them. Now they use rope crossings for surprise and to negotiate otherwise impassable terrain.

WAR IN THE SAHARA

Russian Bear Tracks Lead to the Atlantic

by Karl Phaler
Photos by Adrian Wecer



Polisario guerrilla armed with French-made MAS 36 7.5mm rifle.

NIGHT flight to Africa: The Royal Air Maroc flight from JFK to Casablanca is a fairly painless transition into North Africa. Leaving New York at night heading east, the dawn is here before I'm ready, but by then the Azores pass beneath and we begin our descent to the African coast. No matter how often I fly over water, I'm always glued to the window waiting for landfall, like any sailor after a long ocean passage. Some habits just refuse to die.

This time the anticipation is even greater than usual. I'm going back to a country which is at once the most exotic and the most familiar, in Western terms, of any Arab nation. Morocco has been a crossroads for traders since Roman times, and in the clash of Eastern and Western civilizations, it has been a staging area and a battleground for a dozen centuries.

Throughout most of this

century, Morocco has been under French domination, and the desert and mountain frontiers of the kingdom have witnessed the blooding of countless legionnaires. In 1956 Mohammed V regained independence for his nation, but after his death in 1961, his son, Hassan II, faced both domestic violence in the '60s and two attempted coups by his military forces in 1971 and 1972.

When I was here last, in 1974, it seemed as if the troubled past was receding and a new era of tranquility and progress beginning. But in 1975 the Moroccans greatly increased their territory by annexation of the vast desert wasteland of the Spanish Sahara, below Morocco on the Atlantic coast, between Mauritania and the ocean.

In that process, they also had bought into one of the longest-running desert wars the world has ever seen, with an international cast of Marxist players on the other side. I was intensely curious to see how this war was going, and even more, what affect the war was having on Morocco.

Because few Moroccans speak English, and even fewer U.S. reporters speak French, let alone Arabic, the Stateside press carried only fragmentary and often-garbled accounts of the fighting. PBS, of course, had done a "docu-drama" eulogizing the brave Marxist nomads in their struggle against Moroccan exploitation. (Somehow or other, the heroes of PBS reports are often waving

Kalashnikovs.) If my nose for

disinformation was correct, that meant there was another story behind the one the KGB wanted to tell. Most of all, I wanted to know what there could possibly be in the southern deserts that the Russians wanted so badly. From my studies of this part of the world, I was at a loss as to what could be so interesting. The Spanish had come late to the colonial expansion in Africa below the Mediterranean coast, and as a result they reaped few of the rewards gained by French and British conquest. Instead of the fertile lands of the Algerian coast or the Kenyan highlands, the Spanish wound up with a huge, desolate wasteland: the Spanish Sahara.

Extending a thousand kilometers along the Atlantic coast between Morocco to the north and Mauritania to the south, the territory reached inland up two ancient river valleys, where the waters have not flowed for 3,000 years. The eastern boundaries of the territory were poorly defined in the region where it adjoined Algeria and southern Morocco, which themselves have no settled border. As virtually all the residents of the territory except for a few thousand nomads were settled in the coastal area, the Spanish generally relied upon the French Foreign Legion for control of the inland areas.

If the Spanish colony was a wasteland, it was at least somewhat more durable than other colonies. The African rush to independence in the '50s and '60s passed by the Spanish Sahara. After the return to independence of Morocco in 1956, there was some agitation against Spanish rule, but in 1958 the Spanish and the French had launched Operation Ecouvillon in an attempt to suppress the anti-colonial efforts. The operation is said to have succeeded in largely destroying the camel stocks of

RIGHT: Sneaker-clad Polisario guerrillas carry MAS 36 rifles. BELOW: Polisario officer gives guerillas and their families political instruction. BOTTOM: Polisario political cadre officer flashes victory sign.



the region, upon which the nomads depended for their existence.

By the early '70s, however, the Spanish colonial presence had become an obvious anachronism. Franco's deteriorating health, continued Moroccan agitation and United Nations pressure for a referendum made it only a matter of time until the Spanish departed. In 1974 the Spanish undertook a thorough census of the inhabitants of the Saharan provinces in preparation for decolonization. (The census counted only 75,000 residents of the Spanish territory, including nomads.)

Suspecting the Spanish were attempting to create a nominally independent "nation" which would remain economically linked to Spain, Morocco filed a suit in the World Court at The Hague, asserting historic Moroccan sovereignty over the Spanish Sahara. (In the Middle Ages, Morocco had ruled an empire stretching from black Africa to central Spain, and Morocco, although placed under a "protectorate" by the French in 1912, had never been a European colony.)

In the normal course of events, there seemed little reason for anyone to oppose the Moroccan claims of historic rule over the Spanish Sahara. In the fall of 1974 I travelled along the southern frontier, visiting and talking with R'Gubiyat nomads whose tribes had wandered the Sahara since Roman times.

(They all had four or five different



identity cards, depending on which political entity claimed the land they were traversing — but nations and empires are merely passing annoyances in the eyes of the R'Gubiyat.)

The land of their wanderings was as desolate and barren as any area on earth, and those few members of the United Nations with populations as small as that of the Spanish Sahara were generally island states. For differing reasons, however, the Spanish, Algerians, Mauritians (until 1979) and Russians all found reason to become involved in a struggle for control of the western Sahara which goes on today.

The Spanish interest was clear: After WWII a huge phosphate deposit had





been discovered at Bu Craa, in the desert south of Laayoune. This spurred the Spanish to their only investment in the colony, a gigantic extraction facility feeding an immense conveyor belt carrying the mineral to the coast. (The phosphate mining activity, of course, was a favorite target of anti-colonial forces.)

Morocco itself has vast phosphate deposits in the plains between Casablanca and Marrakech, but the western Sahara reserves, although smaller, were sufficient to maintain a lively Spanish interest in continued economic influence over the region despite Moroccan pressure.

The Algerian interest in the western Sahara is less obvious, but even stronger. To begin with, since their bitterly won independence from France in 1962, the Algerians (under the leadership of Houari Boumedienne until his death in 1978) have been engaged in a continuing ideological contest with Morocco for regional dominance.

Although Algeria is fortunate enough to possess oil, the Saharan phosphates would be vital in supporting Algeria's suffering (Marxist) agricultural economy. Also, the development of heavy industry requires iron ore. The Algerian iron resources are concentrated in the region of Gara Djebilet, in the extreme southwest corner of Algeria below Tindouf.

Exploitation of these resources, according to Soviet-sponsored studies, is not feasible if the ore must be transported thousands of kilometers north to the Mediterranean coast. It is only a short distance, however, from the Tindouf mines through the Sahara to the Atlantic coast.

Finally, as Bismark pointed out, the only constant in politics is geography. Morocco is the historic crossroads of Africa, sitting astride the great east-west routes from Egypt and the north-south routes to black Africa.

Algerian control of the Spanish Sahara would complete an encirclement of Morocco, giving Algeria dominance in future regional economic development efforts. For an entire complex of reasons, the Algerians were even more strongly motivated than the Spanish in attempting to prevent Morocco from regaining control of the Saharan territories. What followed was predictable.

In 1974 there emerged on the scene the "Popular Front for the Liberation of Sakret-el-Hamry and Rio de Oro," or *Polisario*, an organization dedicated to independence for the two provinces of Spanish Sahara, rather than union with Morocco. According to Morocco's King Hassan II, "Polisario is a creation of Spain, Algeria and Mauritania," formed with extensive assistance from Libya. In support of this view, Hassan points out that Polisario never engaged in actions

against the Spanish while they retained control of the territory.

Under any analysis, it is clear the struggle for the western Sahara is also of great interest to the Soviet Union, the source of the Libyan-supplied Polisario armament. It may be the Russian interest initially was only to support Algeria, a friendly socialist state, in its conflict with pro-Western Morocco.

The subsequent course of events, however, strongly suggests there is a distinct and vital objective in the western deserts apart from the interests of Algeria. (Indeed, it would be surprising if this were not the case — Soviet foreign policy has never been noted

for its altruism.) The eventual level of Soviet support for the Saharan war could not in any case be explained simply by reference to the principles of socialist fraternity. There was, as usual, a deep structure underlying the Soviet effort.

I had laid all this out for SOF and was going to Morocco on assignment to cover the confused course of the desert war, and to figure out what the Russians could be after in this forsaken wasteland. As my plane touched down in Casablanca, I knew that in order to understand, I would have to unravel the tangled history of events since 1975, and I needed a starting place.

ON the road again in Morocco: At the airport I rented a car, and took off northward for the half-hour run into Casablanca to stock up on books and maps, and some Turkish coffee to fortify me for the rest of the day's journey. Casablanca is the commercial center of Morocco and, after finishing my provisioning, I headed for the modern divided four-lane highway which runs north 100 kilometers along the coast to the capital, Rabat.

The drive, in my rented Renault, gave me a chance to relearn the no-holds-barred motoring style favored by Moroccans, and time to decide on my approach to digging out the information I needed. All things considered, I decided to try the front-door route.

Polisario woman guards desert camp with MAT 49 SMG.

After settling in Rabat, I visited the American press attache at the United States Information Services (USIS) offices in the center of town, around the corner from the Soviet cultural mission and a few blocks from the huge American Embassy. As it turned out, I had a surprisingly easy time getting a letter of introduction to the head of the information section of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and I duly presented the letter and my SOF credentials at the Ministry.

This turned out to be less than the smartest move I'd made. Ministry personnel provided me with a mass of documents (including a few in English) but were extremely vague about arranging appointments with key officials.

Instead, I shuttled back and forth for days between the domestic Ministry of Information and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, enjoying the company of a not-too-subtle "tail." Even so, I was able to piece together the outlines of one of the great unknown dramatic events of our time: the Green March.

The tranquil wasteland I had seen in the south in 1974 had been on the verge of massive change. By late 1975, the situation in the Spanish Sahara was deteriorating faster than Franco's health. In October the World Court rendered its decision in Morocco's case. The court found that peoples of the Spanish Sahara had historic ties of fealty with the Kingdom of Morocco, although the court did not agree that these ties amounted to Moroccan sovereignty over the region.

For Morocco, however, judicial recognition of historic loyalty was sufficient. On 16 October, King Hassan announced to the world he was sending 350,000 unarmed Moroccans (this number was chosen because it represents the annual birthrate of the kingdom) into the Spanish Sahara to reclaim it for Morocco.

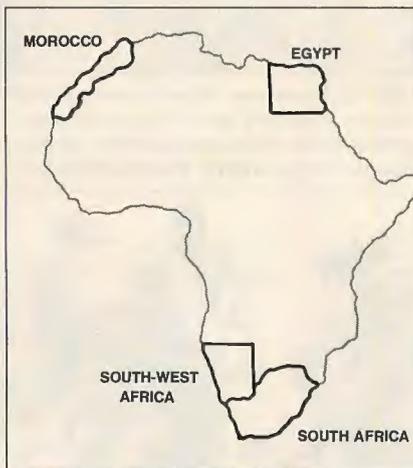
Incredibly, the Green March became a reality. Although Algeria immediately announced its opposition to the march, many other Arab countries strongly supported Morocco. By the end of October, Spanish authorities were evacuating Spanish citizens from the province.

Prince Juan Carlos visited Laayoune on 2 November, assuring the Spanish Army its honor would remain intact, while stressing the need to avoid bloodshed. To this end, the Spanish withdrew their troops 40 kilometers below the border with Morocco. Meanwhile, at Tarfaya, just across the border on the Atlantic, thousands of trucks continued to bring Moroccans from all of the country's provinces to the staging area for the march.

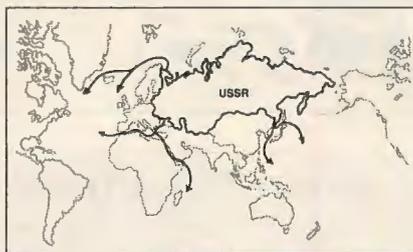
On 6 November 1955, Hassan's father, Mohammed V, had concluded an agreement with France for the



Dotted line traces route of Great Desert Wall, barrier designed to protect Moroccan forces and population to north.



Triangle of U.S. support in Africa.



Lines depict Soviet naval forces, illustrating restricted access routes from major heartland ports to open ocean.

restoration of Moroccan independence. Hassan, with his usual sense of the dramatic and historic, on the morning of 6 November 1975 gave the order to proceed, and a third of a million unarmed Moroccans (with the prime minister of Morocco leading the way) surged across the frontier into the Sahara.

The Green March worked. Within three days, a tripartite agreement among Spain, Mauritania and Morocco had been prepared, and Hassan recalled his marchers. On 14 November the agreement, providing for Spanish withdrawal and the appointment of Mauritanian and Moroccan governors, was signed. The larger northern province of Sakret-el-Hamry went to Morocco, and the southern province of

Rio de Oro went to Mauritania.

War in the desert followed immediately. In the next three months, the Moroccan armed forces fought battles with Algerian forces at several desert outposts, including Bir Lehlu, Guelta Zemmour, Mahbes, Tifariti and Amghala. Some hundreds of Algerian troops were taken prisoner, and remain today in custody in Morocco. According to authoritative Moroccan sources, an entire Algerian brigade was also captured, but repatriated after mediation by Egypt's Anwar Sadat.

The logistic base for the Polisario effort is the huge refugee camp complex near Tindouf, Algeria. (The political base is, of course, in Algiers itself.) Polisario claims there are 100,000 refugees from the Spanish Sahara in the camps, while the Moroccans insist that no more than 5,000 of the Tindouf population were inhabitants of the western Sahara. Since Algeria has not permitted the UN High Commission on Refugees to inspect the camps, the truth is impossible to ascertain.

In any event, a military force of at least 15,000 is available to Polisario for operations against Moroccan forces. (The Moroccans claim that the great bulk of these troops are recruited from among the nomad populations of Algeria, Mauritania, Mali and Niger. In the latter three countries, the long Saheel drought has made employment of any sort a desirable alternative to starvation.)

From 1976 through 1978, the desert battles continued, with heavy expenditures of men and materiel on both sides, but no decisive change in the military situation. The main arena of progress for Polisario was on the political front, where they gained recognition as a national entity from many of the African states allied with the Algerians and Libyans, as well as being accorded diplomatic recognition by many East Bloc countries elsewhere in the world.

The political offensive undertaken by Polisario was coupled with strong pressure on Morocco by other nations to hold a referendum in the Spanish Sahara. (The United States, for example, has not recognized Morocco's claim of right to the western Sahara, and has been among those nations urging a referendum.) The strongest pressures came from the Organization of African Unity (of which Morocco was a founding member) whose membership includes 50 of the 51 African nations, excluding only the Union of South Africa. Hassan rejected these pressures while the seesaw desert war continued.

In the course of fighting the desert war, the Moroccans had, of course, employed some of the armaments they had received from the United States.

Sadly, but predictably, the human-rights crowd in the Carter administration screamed in protest at the use of U.S. weaponry against Marxists and, with their allies in congress, embargoed arms sales to Morocco during the 1976-1978 period.

I knew this policy had been changed in 1979, well before Iran and Afghanistan. Contacts among the foreign-press community gave me some fascinating bits of information which shed some light on these events, but too many pieces of the puzzle were missing. It was time to try the back door, and find out what had happened in 1979 to change U.S. policy toward the desert war.

I talked to students and politicians in the old imperial cities of Fez and Meknes, military officers in Marrakech and nameless men on both sides of the huge Rif Mountain drug operations.

One name kept coming up, and so I wound up back in Rabat, in a hotel lobby, waiting for a distinguished visitor. The story that came out of that meeting, and many later ones, has been verified insofar as possible, and seems to be an accurate, although partisan, account of the reasons for the Carter about-face, and an example of what can be done with technology and imagination.

Early in 1979, with the military and political situations stalemated, high-level attention was given to a new Polisario initiative. According to authoritative sources, Polisario was assisted in this process by large numbers of Cuban advisers working in the Tindouf camps. Most interesting of all, North Vietnamese Gen. Vo Nguyen Giap, the hero of Dien Bien Phu, arrived in Tindouf in 1979 to help devise a new military strategy for Polisario.

(There are also reports that East Germans operate a large COMINT/radar facility at Tindouf. Thus, Polisario appears to benefit from all three of the third-country forces commonly employed by the Soviets in support of their overseas military objectives since the Andropov programs began in 1967.)

The Cubans and Giap, however, did not agree on a proper strategy for Polisario forces. The Cubans reportedly favored the approach employed, for example, in Central America: infiltration of urban areas, destruction of communication and transportation facilities, assassination of officials and hit-and-run raids against military outposts.

Gen. Giap, on the other hand, was under no illusions about the efficacy of such activities without a solid base of support among the resident population. Instead, he counseled a strategy of mass, mobility and concentration of firepower to achieve economy of force. If these principles seem familiar, they



ABOVE: Moroccan Army troops, carrying French FSA 49/56 cal. 7.5mm rifles, capture Polisario guerrillas in Spanish Sahara battle. BELOW: Moroccan soldier kicks Polisario guerrilla as he checks for weapons. Moroccan weapons include (left to right): French MAS 36 cal. 7.5mm; French FSA 49 cal. 7.5mm.



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Soldier of Fortune first became acquainted with Karl Phaler when we read an editorial written by him about the U.S. media's misunderstanding of the Vietnam experience — then and now. We contacted Phaler, asked for and received permission to print the editorial (see "Rewriting History: Gen. Giap & American Newspeak," *SOF*, September '82) and, because we were impressed with his writing, asked if he were interested in doing other articles for *SOF*.

Knowing Phaler had spent 10 years in the U.S. Navy, retiring in 1968 as a lieutenant but still in the Reserves as a lieutenant commander, and served in Vietnam from 1964-65 as a Communications/CIC officer aboard the *USS Edwards* and later as Senior Naval Adviser in II and IV Corps, we expected he would write about Vietnam or naval operations. (Phaler also worked on the Saudi naval expansion program in 1980.) Central America was also a possibility because we also knew

his private military consulting firm had designed the maritime interdiction program now used by El Salvador to stop the shipment of arms to the guerrillas.

Surprisingly, Phaler suggested North Africa, specifically Morocco with its on-going war in the Spanish Sahara with the Polisario. He had visited Morocco in 1976 on a "quasi-vacation," and had stayed abreast of the maneuvering there. This article is the result.

Phaler's Vietnam experience is the subject of two chapters of Al Santoli's *Everything We Had* and earned him a Bronze Star in 1968. He also participated in the historic Tonkin Gulf incident in 1964. After retiring from the Navy in 1968, Phaler attended law school and worked for the California attorney general's office for 10 years. He now operates a small-boat dealership in San Diego and does private military consulting work around the world, including Morocco, Saudi Arabia and Central America.

are straight from von Clausewitz — it may be the great Gen. Giap himself had learned something from the 1975 invasion of South Vietnam. (See "Rewriting History: Gen. Giap and American Newspeak," SOF, September '82.)

Pursuing the Giap line, Polisario forces began a series of concentrated attacks on widely dispersed Moroccan outposts, inflicting heavy casualties. Moroccan losses of men and materiel mounted, and the costs of the war in the south became an increasing burden on a treasury already burdened with development projects and escalating energy costs.

At this point, an innovative counter-strategy was devised by King Hassan's closest counselor, Gen. Ahmed Dlimi, who had been in charge of the planning for the Green March and commanded the Southern Zone after 1978. The great bulk of what population there is in the western Sahara is concentrated at Laayoune and Bojador on the coast and the outpost at Semara, with another enclave far to the south at the great harbor of Dakhla. Viewing the desert as a sea upon which the opposing forces moved like ships, Dlimi decided to establish a barrier wall protecting the population base and the lines of communication to the north, behind which Moroccan forces could be deployed to meet any attempted penetration of the barrier.

The northeastern terminus of the wall is the high ground of the Jebel Ouarkziz near Zag, rising above the dry river valley of the Oued Draa below the mountains of the Anti-Atlas. The wall, now an earthen bulwark several meters across, turns south to pass near the outposts of Asgane and Khraybichat and describe a wide circle to the east of the main outpost at Semara.

From there the wall runs west below the Bu Craa mines to the coast south of Bojador, for a total extent of some 300 miles, enclosing what Gen. Dlimi refers to as "the useful triangle." (A separate barrier has been constructed encircling and protecting the harbor at Dakhla, formerly known as Villa Cisneros. With its 40 miles of anchorage protected from the Atlantic, Dakhla is reminiscent of Cam Ranh Bay 20 years ago.) During the construction of the wall, there were several battles in the Oued Draa Valley in which Moroccan forces claim to have defeated Polisario's best units.

Political developments in this period also improved the security position for Morocco: After four years of indecisive maneuvering, in 1979 Mauritania withdrew from the struggle and signed a "peace treaty" with Polisario. Morocco thereupon extended its administration to include the southernmost province of Rio de Oro



Polisarios patrol desert in three British Army First Production Land Rover 4x4s; one on right is long-wheel-base model.

(also referred to as Oued Eddahab), continuing the fight on all fronts.

In 1981, following mediation by the Saudis, a separate non-aggression pact was signed at Taif by Mauritania and Morocco, although the Moroccans have since found that Polisario raids continue to come from Mauritanian territory.

On 3 March 1981, King Hassan sent a message to Gen. Dlimi congratulating him on the completion, near Semara, of the wall. With electronic sensors strung along its length, small army units in bunkers at regular intervals and C-130s with Side-Looking Airborne Radar (SLAR) flying barrier patrol over the region, the Moroccan forces have the capability of deploying troop and artillery reinforcements to any threatened sector.

The wall represents the largest-scale implementation ever attempted of containment as a counterinsurgency strategy. (Significantly, the first major Polisario operation after the wall's completion was a 24-25 March attack upon the outpost of Gueltat Zemmour some 100 kilometers beyond the wall, near the Mauritanian border.)

King Hassan coupled the now-achieved containment policy with a bold diplomatic initiative. Aside from the pressure at the Organization for African Unity (where a narrow majority of states already had recognized Polisario), senior officials in the Carter administration, always sympathetic to "liberation" movements, were pressuring Hassan to undertake direct negotiations with Polisario, threatening to reduce Morocco's FMS credits well below the then-current level. (Does any

of this sound familiar, with the setting changed to Central America?)

With the security of the population ensured, Hassan, at the 18th OAU summit in Nairobi, announced on 26 June 1981, that Morocco would agree to a cease-fire, withdrawal of troops to barracks and outside supervision of a referendum in which those listed in the Spanish census could participate. Although this gesture resulted in some domestic trouble for Hassan, the external political threat, as well as the military threat, seemed effectively defused by these Moroccan initiatives.

The military response from Polisario and its allies was not long in coming. Up to this point, Polisario armament had been comprised largely of Land Rovers, RPGs, SAM-7s and the ubiquitous AK-47s. But on 13 October 1981, while Moroccan forces were withdrawing northward from *Gueltat Zemmour* to regroup behind the wall, they were hit by an armored group led by dozens of Soviet T-55 MBT and BMP-1 vehicles, with Sagger missile systems and infrared capability.

The intelligence systems supporting these forces included Soviet and Cuban ELINT trawlers operating off the Canary Islands relaying communications intercepts via a Cosmos satellite to the Tindouf COMINT center. The Libyan weapons storehouses (and the Soviet treasury) clearly had opened wide for Polisario.

The escalation in the ground war, however, was overshadowed by another dimension of the conflict. A Moroccan Air Force C-130, following its normal patrol route during the withdrawal, flew south along the Atlantic coast, turned inland along the Mauritanian border, and then north over the Sahara, at its normal altitude of 18,000 feet. It vanished. Worse, two F1 Mirage fighters sent after it vanished, also, and later two F-5 fighters were



state of the host country for each year's summit becomes the chairman of the Organization of African Unity for the next year, and the spokesman for Africa at the United Nations and in other areas. The fervor with which Libya's Col. Khadafy sought this opportunity can easily be imagined.

It was not to be. In August the OAU, split by the Sahara issue, was unable to muster a quorum, and the summit had to be postponed. Then began a period of frantic backstage maneuvering, with increasing friction seeming to exist between the Libyans, who wanted a summit, and the Algerians, who insisted above all else on Polisario participation in the OAU.

In fact, at a Polisario "congress" in "liberated territory" (in Algeria, say the Moroccans) on 14-16 October, the only outside parties present were supposed to be Algeria, Mauritania and Libya. The Algerians, however, turned back the Libyan delegation at Algiers, refusing them permission to fly on to Tindouf and the congress.

Nonetheless, the Libyan efforts were rewarded by the announcement in Algiers on 29 October that Polisario had "voluntarily and provisionally" withdrawn from OAU participation so a summit could be held in Tripoli on 23 November, for which preparations began immediately. Col. Khadafy seemed to be en route to his own version of a "bully pulpit," having found a means to appease the contesting factions on the Sahara issue.

Once more the schizophrenic nature of Khadafy's acts defeated his apparent goal. Earlier in the year, he had withdrawn Libyan troops from Chad, permitting the ouster of the government that had been sustained by them.

Against all reason, however, Khadafy insisted upon bringing the deposed Chadian ruler to Tripoli, with the apparent intention of excluding the currently recognized government from the OAU summit. In these circumstances, the Polisario question never arose, as the November attempt at a summit in Tripoli collapsed before it even opened.

The longstanding OAU deadlock finally was broken in July '83, after Polisario agreed not to participate in the meeting, and Khadafy's blustering had faded into the background. A resolution was passed seeking a cease-fire and a referendum, but the practical details of implementing the resolution remain to be resolved. Few observers think the war will be over soon.

The history of the desert war is of great interest in its own right. Even more interesting than the course of the conflict, however, are the reasons for the conflict in the first place.

Continued on page 113

shot down, along with a helicopter. One of the Mirage pilots had been at 30,000 feet when he was hit.

From this and other data, it was clear Polisario was deploying SAM-6 and SAM-8 missiles, among the more sophisticated items in the Soviet AAW inventory. (Polisario sources in Algiers even claim SAM-9s are now in use.) As Hassan pointed out, the technicians needed for successful operation of these complex weapons systems were clearly not Africans.

The literal decimation of the Moroccan Air Force at least had the salutary result of fully awakening the United States to the new dimensions of the desert war, and the new administration has responded with a scheduled upgrade of FY '83 FMS credits to the \$100M level, including Hueys, radar, night-vision devices and anti-SAM ECM capabilities.

Also, long-delayed delivery of 100 M60 MBTs was put in motion. Finally, early in 1982, the United States and Morocco signed a six-year agreement providing for transit and refueling facilities at two airfields for RDF support. This, in particular, has raised hackles among Polisario's supporting states, who charge the United States is, in fact, reopening American bases in Morocco.

(The sensitivity of this area is well-illustrated by the case of the Green Berets. A 15-man USSF unit at Kenitra provides parachute instruction to Moroccan airborne units. Recently, they appeared at an American Embassy reception in Rabat in full kit, supposedly to demonstrate the open nature of their mission. The resulting play in the left-wing African press about

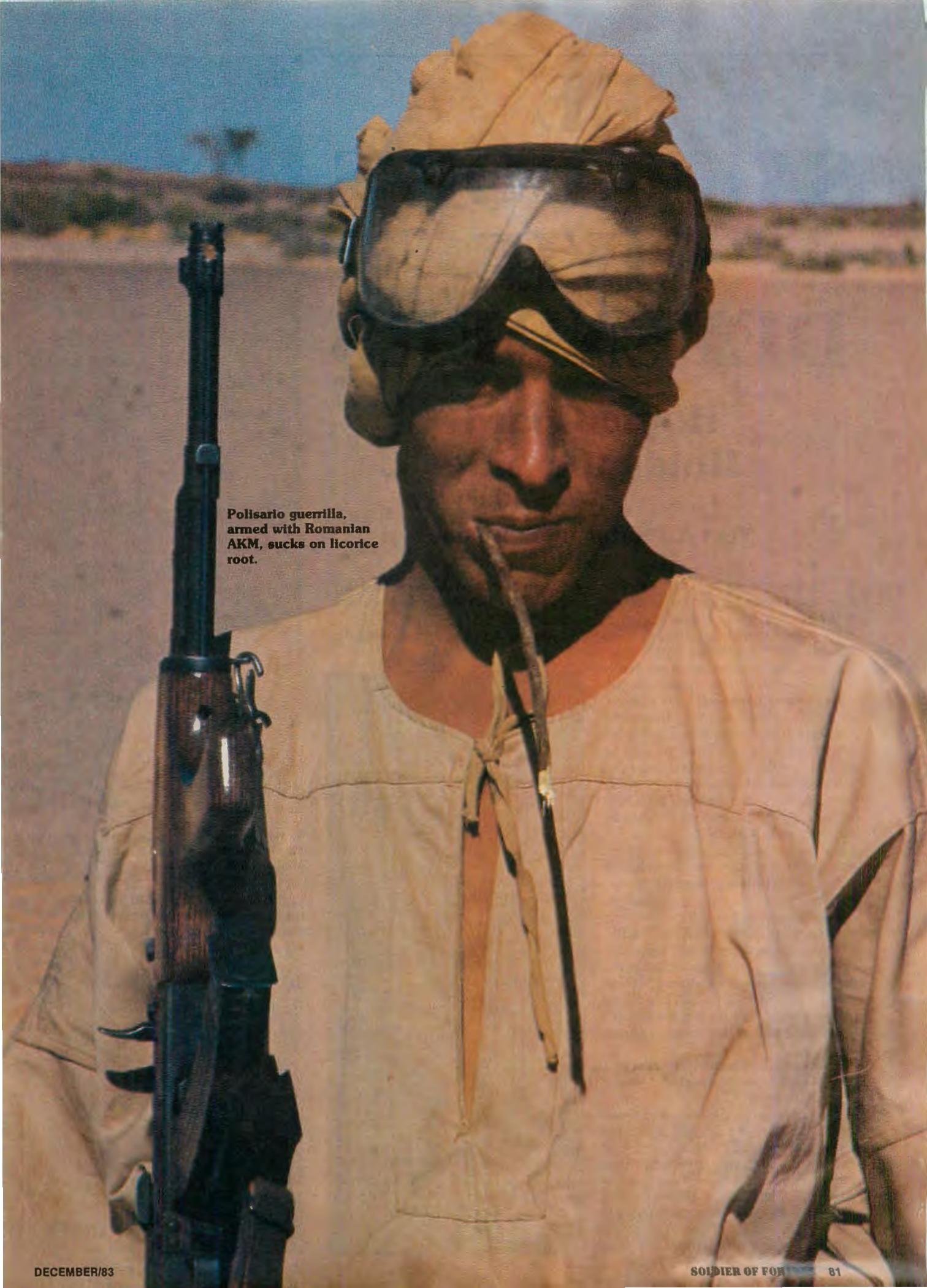
Well-armed Polisarios with Soviet T-55 tank, French MAS 36 cal. 7.5mm rifle and Soviet AKM cal. 7.62x39mm assault rifle.

Special Forces providing clandestine training for Moroccans was both predictable and, with common sense, avoidable.)

The wall has, however, fulfilled its purpose. Another major Polisario attack in January and a large-scale assault on the Semara line in August '82 were both failures, even though in both cases sophisticated armor with IR capabilities was employed by Polisario. The war has become a long-range artillery duel, a situation strongly favorable to the Moroccans since the civilian population is removed from the military arena.

In these circumstances, it should have surprised no one to find a new diplomatic offensive in the making. Notwithstanding Hassan's referendum offer at the Nairobi OAU summit in 1981, during a routine OAU ministers conference in February 1982, the OAU secretary-general, Edem Kodjo of Tanzania, admitted the "Saharan Arab Democratic Republic" (the political arm of Polisario) to membership in the OAU on a simple majority vote of ministers. Morocco and 18 other nations, believing such a matter could only be decided by a two-thirds vote of heads of state, withdrew from the meeting. Because another OAU rule requires a two-thirds quorum, the meeting was abandoned.

For a variety of reasons, this split in the OAU has had major consequences. The 19th annual summit of the OAU had been scheduled for August 1982 in Tripoli, Libya. By tradition, the head of



**Polisario guerrilla,
armed with Romanian
AKM, sucks on licorice
root.**

EL SALVADOR'S CIVIL DEFENDERS

Home Guard Holds the Line

Text & Photos by Bob Poos

IT'S a commonplace sight in El Salvador — in all Central America for that matter. A farmer trudging home from his fields, leathery brown face, machete dangling from one wrist. They seldom pay any attention to passing vehicles, which are mostly wooden-wheeled oxcarts. But this one did.

It was a gray Toyota and I was a passenger in it. The driver was Lydia Chavez of the *New York Times* and the other occupant Art Allen of the Associated Press. We were on the road from the city of Usulután, about 60 miles southeast of San Salvador, wandering toward Berlin, one of the larger cities in El Salvador, about 30 miles north of Usulután. We never made it to Berlin.

For Oscar Cruz, age indeterminate but probably 50 or so — he looked much older because of a lifetime's exposure to sun, wind and rain — dropped his machete and came dashing toward the little car, waving his arms and shouting excitedly in Spanish.

I speak a little Spanish and understand more so I got the gist of his excited shouting, the first words of which were: "*Guerillos, guerrillos.*" He pointed to a village faintly visible through the dust and the sun's glare just ahead on our rutted, potholed gravel road.

A woman hitchhiker we had picked up a few miles back literally vanished. I wanted to.

The village just up ahead is named Nueva Granada and must house about 100-150 lower-middle-class Salvadorans.

The man told us this story: Guerrillas of the FPL (Popular Liberation Front) had entered the village just hours earlier and "fought a big battle with the CD [Civil Defense Militia]." He thought, furthermore, that the guerrillas were still there

and, with their blood up, might blow anyone away who looked suspicious — like us three gringos.

Lydia and Art thought the farmer didn't

THE PLAYERS

by Bob Poos

There are five major leftist factions opposing the U.S.-backed government in El Salvador and they all come under the umbrella name of FMLN — Martí National Liberation Front. Their political arm is called the DRV, Democratic Revolutionary Front.

The five groups actually in the field against government forces are:

PRP: People's Revolutionary Party.

FARN: Armed Forces of National Resistance.

PRPC: Revolutionary Party of Central American Workers.

FPL: Popular Liberation Front.

PCS: Salvadoran Communist Party.

The last two are the most doctrinaire Marxist groups and the PCS is the one most inclined to almost mindless violence, like executing prisoners. In fact, journalists covering El Salvador have been warned by representatives of the first three about the possible hazards of falling into the FPL's hands.

The main political-arm spokesman, Reuban Zamoro of the DRV, is the one with whom U.S. Special Envoy Richard Stone recently held talks in Bogota, Columbia.



Former Salvadoran Army paratrooper gives weapons instructions to Civil Defense Militiaman in El Salvador.

Civil Defense Militiamen of El Salvador listen attentively to lecture by U.S. Army trainers in San Vicente Dept.





U.S. Army Special Forces trainer with troops of the Cazadores (Hunters) Bn., 5th Brig. during unit's graduation exercises in San Ildefonso, El Salvador. Cazadore training consists of five weeks' intensive boot camp and then five weeks of "On the Job Training" hunting Marxist guerrillas in surrounding hills and mountains of San Vicente Dept. Graduation ceremony was held here because this outfit had helped liberate the town recently and townspeople welcomed it.



EL SALVADOR



ABOVE: Lengthwise view of Puente de Oro (Bridge of Gold) blown by Marxist rebels in El Salvador. Demolitions experts suspect work was done by Cubans brought in specifically for job. Bridge was key link over Rio Lempa between capital of San Salvador to Pacific coast.



LEFT: Soldiers of Salvadoran Army's 3rd Brig. clear road in Usulután Dept. near site of three highway bridges blown up by Marxist guerrillas.

RIGHT: Salvadoran soldier stands lonely guard duty in recently liberated village of Santa Clara in Usulután Dept.

BELOW: SOF Executive Editor Bob Poos interviews *campesinos* outside village in El Salvador recently attacked by leftist guerrillas. The *campesinos* warned that to proceed "meant certain death." Poos was with Lydia Chavez, *New York Times*, and Art Allen, Associated Press.



make much sense because of his excitement, so the three of us discussed what we would or should do. Lydia, a brave young woman, was all for proceeding at flank speed. "Even if we get stopped, I've never met any guerrillas in this area, anyhow. Could be a good story."

Art was also for going into the village although he was less fond of the idea of meeting up with guerrillas. "They might fuck us over and hold us for a few days."

So far as is known, the Marxist guerrillas in El Salvador have not deliberately killed any correspondents or photographers — they're very sophisticated about PR.

They have held some for varying periods of time, however, and made them accompany their troops on forced marches. One man recently could no longer keep up with the pace and just sat down along a volcano trail. He made his way later to a friendly village and was rescued by the Salvadoran Army.

I wasn't at all thrilled about this prospect but damned if I was going to back out of anything that the *New York Times* and Associated Press were going to do. So I kept my mouth shut. Hard to do at times like this.

Lydia said, "Well, then, let's leave the car here and go into town on foot."

Art responded, "Aw, fuck it, if we're going to go, let's drive in." That sounded as good as anything I'd heard so far. Who wants to walk a klick in 95-degree weather with a humidity factor of about the same if



they don't have to? So we proceed. Extremely slowly.

The village appeared to be virtually deserted — I believe people were still hiding

Salvadoran soldiers of 3rd Brigade on road-clearing operation near Rio Lempa in Usulután Dept. Communist rebels had been in area two days before.

THE CAZADORES

by Bob Poos

It was eye-blinding, head-splitting hot in San Ildefonso but troopers of the 1st Cazadore Bn., 5th Brigade, seemed to find it pleasant. They had been out walking, seeking Marxist guerrillas in the surrounding hills for five weeks without a break. San Ildefonso was welcome relief.

And this was their day. Graduation it could perhaps be called, the final day of their 10 weeks' training by U.S. Special Forces soldiers based in San Vicente City, about 20 kilometers southwest.

They are the first such unit — *Cazadore* literally means "hunter" — to be trained by U.S. troops.

Their training consists of five weeks' basics, learning drill, weaponry, discipline — an abbreviated boot camp.

Then it's five weeks in the field, actually looking for guerrillas in San Vicente Department. This first U.S.-trained Cazadore Bn. made some contact, but not much. In fact the entire operational Salvadoran Army, some 12,000 in the field, another 6,000 on stand-down, hadn't had much luck in finding guerrillas for about a month during and prior to this writer's visit.

This has led to speculation that the newly emerging Salvadoran Army,

which within the past year has become far more aggressive than in the three previous years of fighting, has "broken the guerrillas' backbone," as one military observer, who asked not to be identified, said.

That may or may not be. It is more likely that the guerrillas are simply taking a breather — resting, refitting, hiding out in their mountain and jungled volcano lairs.

The Cazadores are small — 350-men as opposed to the Salvadoran Army's 1,000-man maneuver battalions. And they are lightly armed with M16s, M60s, M79s and, at the battalion level, 60mm mortars.

Their trainers told SOF the intensive, initial training period even includes night patrolling and day and night ambushes. Many readers will recollect they didn't get anything like that until AIT — if then.

First Cazadores, 5th Brig., chose the town of San Ildefonso as the site for graduation exercises symbolically. It had been held by the government for only about a week after a long occupation by the guerrillas.

Nevertheless, the people seemed genuinely glad to see the camouflage-clad Cazadores, and this writer saw several instances of people handing them fruit and cool drinks without charge.

Their graduation ceremony under the blazing sun in the city's park was blissfully short. The department commander, Col. Golcher, the 5th Brig. CO, Col. Hernandez, and Cazadore officers made brief speeches, the battalion received its colors and an army band struck up the Salvadoran national anthem.

As I watched while the anthem was rendered, I saw something that was, at the same time, moving and significant.

An elderly woman clad in an ill-fitting yellow dress stood at attention as straight as any soldier there and saluted. Tears trickled down her cheeks and *she did not* break the salute until the last note.



EL SALVADOR

out. But Lydia found a family peering cautiously from a second-story veranda of one of the adobe and brick houses surrounding the village's grassy park. A young man approached me and Allen and asked if he could borrow 10 *colones* (a little less than \$4.00 U.S.) for bus fare. I had a 20-*colone* note which I gave him.

We pieced together this story:

Some 250 guerrillas of the FPL — most feared Marxist terrorists in the country — had hit the town, which was defended by a force of 15 Civil Defense Militiamen. The CDs, as they are commonly called, put up a brave defense of their little village. Ten of them died in combat.

They all ran out of ammunition and four of the survivors threw away their old G3s handed down to them by the regular army, which is gradually being armed with M16s, and surrendered.

They and Nueva Granada's mayor were rounded up, their hands tied behind them, and executed in the village square — shot in the backs of their heads by an 11-year-old boy, claimed the villagers.

One CD, Manuel Campos, survived. Upon running out of ammunition, he abandoned his rifle and hid out on a rooftop. Said he: "There were a lot of them and they were better armed."

Villagers (they have become experts in the field) identified guerrilla weapons as mostly FN FALs, but with a sprinkling of M16s. The officers carried M1 Carbines.

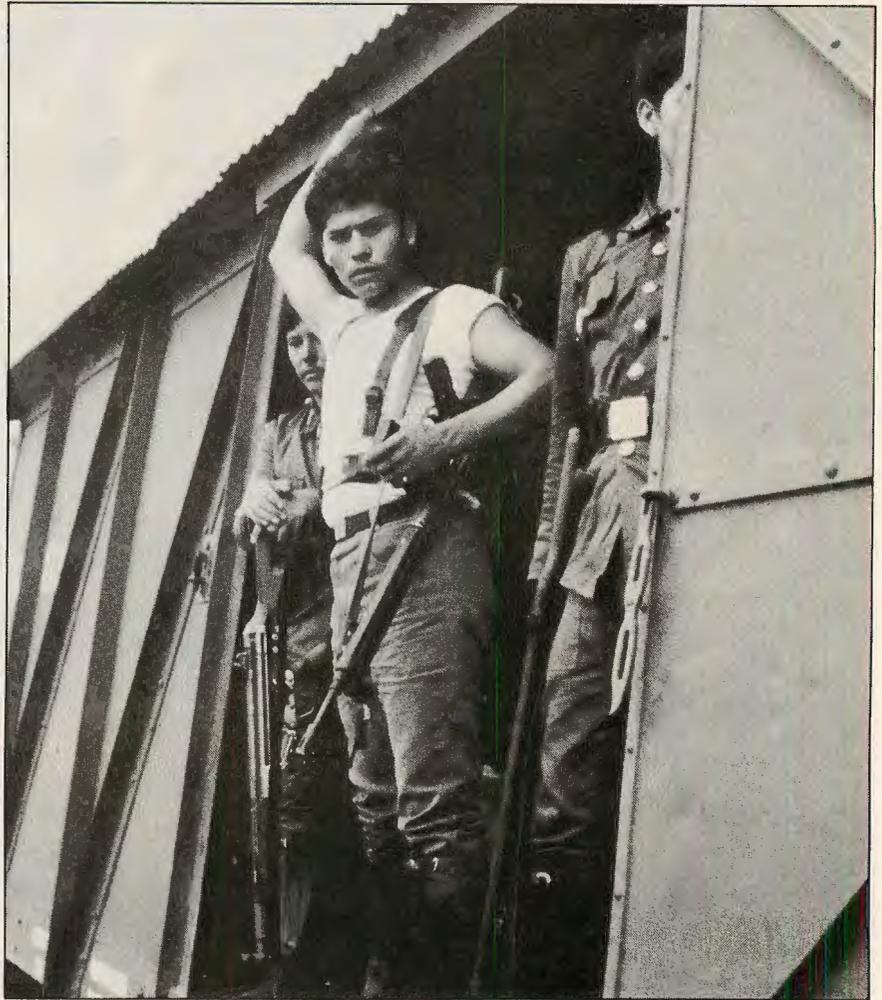
The cobblestoned village main street was literally carpeted with expended brass. I have several 7.62mm and 5.56mm cartridge cases in my desk now as souvenirs. They also scattered propaganda leaflets warning government soldiers and supporters that their comrades and friends "are being devoured by dogs and vultures" because their leaders would not "rescue" them. "Don't let it happen to you," warned the leaflets. I've got two of them in my desk, too.

Reports of guerrilla executions have been increasing in El Salvador since the first of this year, although most have been difficult or impossible to confirm. This one wasn't.

Villagers said 10 to 15 guerrillas perished in the battle.

In a footnote that might be amusing were not the affair so tragic, the guerrillas also stole the town's only TV set. One of the villagers said most of the town would assemble before the set each evening and watch reruns of vintage U.S. shows such as *Gunsmoke* and *Bonanza*, dubbed in Spanish. The guerrillas have powerful battery packs and watch the shows in the security of their jungle hideaways.

Subsequent to the battle, said villagers, a small army patrol of about 50 men arrived, hurriedly swept the village, saw to burial of the dead and left. The guerrillas moved back into the jungle while the soldiers were there, villagers said.



And, they added, "They're not far away now. Probably watching you." That didn't lessen my anxiety quotient any, but they never accosted us.

Elsewhere in Usulután Department (a department is similar to a state or province) that day, two rebels turned themselves in to government forces at San Agustín, about 65 miles east of the capital, under the government's amnesty program, which had been widely publicized via aerial leaflet drops over guerrilla-held territory. They said 200 more rebels wished to give up the struggle, also, but were being held in check by their officers.

The attack on Nueva Granada came as something of a surprise to its inhabitants as guerrillas had not troubled the pro-government hamlet for more than a year. The executions and theft of the TV set didn't win any hearts and minds on this visit.

After interviewing sufficient villagers to get the story and taking photos of the largely deserted "downtown" area, Lydia started the car and Allen and I piled in. "Where we headed for now?" inquired I.

"Home."

That sounded like one of the better ideas I had heard that day.

The Rio Lempa flows just about 10 miles

Salvadoran Army soldiers guard train crossing railroad bridge over Rio Lempa, key north-south transportation link from San Salvador to Pacific coast ports.

east of Nueva Granada and to cross it motorists must await their turn at an old and decrepit railroad bridge which has had asphalt spread between and on both sides of the rails. The reason is the nearby Puente de Oro (Bridge of Gold) was blown sometime ago by the leftist insurgents. (Most experts believe it was done by Cubans imported for the job because the local guerrillas do not have the sophistication in explosives to accomplish the job done.)

As a former EOD specialist in the Marines, I had to admire the professionalism attached to the work. Whoever did it dropped the center span perfectly. It lies twisted, partly submerged and partly on land.

Traffic over the remaining bridge is strictly a one-way proposition and those on the banks simply await their turn in the blazing sun as occasionally a narrow gauge train of 10 or 15 cars — including one filled with watchful troops — travels to Pacific coast ports from San Salvador and returns. Guerrillas used to stop these trains and plun-

der them — or blow the tracks — but they have been running successfully for several months now.

Sometimes the traffic on the other side is a convoy of goods-laden trucks, sometimes just a line of passenger cars. But soldiers from the Atonal Bn., one of those trained by U.S. instructors, handle the parade skillfully and the wait is not unbearable. And there are always women and children on the roadside selling fruit, including watermelon, which I bought every time, ate — and managed not to get sick.

Upon crossing the bridge and moving through the dusty old town of Zacacoluteca, it's decent highway for a while, then a long, rough trip over a section of road which is being rebuilt. While jouncing over this stretch, the thought occurred to me that SOF should take a closer look at these CDs and their training. I had seen a few of them and watched them drill in the *cuartel* (military headquarters compound) at Usulután and those particular ones by their military bearing and general easy, familiar way with their weapons — M16s — obviously had more than the basics, probably former soldiers in the Salvadoran Army.

So I figured my next visit would be to San Vicente, where I had been on my last trip to Salvador (see "SOF Under Fire in El Salvador," November '81). A battle at that time in which I had taken part with a company from the 5th Brig. is still talked about in San Vicente Dept.

I had some contacts with the U.S. Special Forces "A" Team located in the *cuartel* there and figured they would be helpful. They were. Just so long as a reporter obeys the ground rules: no names and no full-face photos. Both the trainers and the U.S. Embassy have gotten more sensitive about such things since the recent guerrilla murder of Lt. Cmdr. Albert A. Schaufelberger, both a naval trainer and deputy chief of security at the Embassy in San Salvador.

SOF found itself lucky enough to watch the final day of training for a group of CDs in Guadalupe, about 15 kilometers from San Vicente City.

This has long been a guerrilla-threatened, frequently occupied area. The location of the battle SOF covered can be seen from the CD training area.

It is hard to believe in these days of "do nothing and get something for it" that these men are doing something terribly risky and getting paid nothing for it. The only government assistance they get is an occasional truckload of basic-substance food — if they happen to be in an area that is not self-sustaining.

Their training varies widely as does their military experience — and their weapons. This detachment had 25 ancient G3s which, said a U.S. trainer, will be passed out to those on duty — half at all times. This detachment had received only five days' training, although it was concentrated work and done by the trainers, not by the regular Salvadoran Army. Training will continue under a Salvadoran National Police sergeant



Salvadoran Army medic at his post in Santa Clara, El Salvador.

who himself received training at a U.S. installation in Panama. Additionally, the unit has five former soldiers, one of them an ex-Salvadoran paratrooper and one a former sergeant.

The group's activities will not be limited to static defense of the community of 3,000 people. It will conduct patrolling and ambush positions in the surrounding jungle.

The men also received instruction in in-

SPCA

by Bob Poos

Every reporter and photographer who works in Central America becomes a member of the SPCA.

Back in North America, that is synonymous with the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals. The Central American version, based in San Salvador's UPI office, has a similar purpose — prevention of needless cruelty. It is the Salvador Press Corps Association and possession of one of its cards could well mean a longer or, at least, more pleasant life.

Every Central American nation requires correspondents to obtain an official letter either from the government or the army. But they don't cut much ice with Marxist guerrillas in places like El Salvador, Guatemala and Honduras.

But the insurgents do recognize the SPCA card and, thus far, have treated most correspondents who have fallen into their hands reasonably well.

It all started out as a joke just a few years ago, but the cards soon met with widespread acceptance and credence from governments and guerrillas alike.

They're kind of like credit cards. Don't leave home without them.

telligence gathering from a U.S. trainer who specializes in that field and speaks fluent Spanish.

To a man the trainers were enthusiastic about the CD program, which is the final phase of the government's relatively new three-stage pacification approach: Stage 1, using lightly armed, highly mobile "hunter" Cazadore Battalion units as super recon forces, finding the guerrillas, flushing them out and fixing them until Stage 2, the arrival of conventional infantry units with heavier weapons support, which will remain in the area until it gives the appearance at least of being free of guerrilla activity.

Said a trainer: "You've got to realize that not only do most of these guys not have uniforms, many of them don't even have shoes. You just have to admire the hell out of them for doing what they're doing with what they've got."

That sentiment was echoed by trainers ranging in rank from lieutenant colonel to Spec. 5. They all love their work — said one, "I'd like to stay here for five years" — but they seem to achieve an even greater sense of accomplishment from their work with the CDs.

I watched this rugged little band of men that day and was impressed. Most of them proved adept at field-stripping their rifles. They were ragged at low crawling and running and hitting the deck, then rolling over three or four flips to left or right. But they went about all of it with great enthusiasm.

Three men in the detachment permitted brief interviews on condition that they not be named and their features, concealed in photos. I expressed some surprise at this, since I thought it unlikely the guerrillas would ever lay their hands on a copy of SOF. Said a trainer wryly: "You'd be surprised at what a good intelligence operation the guerrillas have back in the States."

The three, to whom we'll assign first names not their own, said:

Jose: "We're doing this to protect our homes and families. We're not going to leave just because the guerrillas are here."

Juan: "We're here to defend against the subversives. We know who the enemy is."

Pablo: "This is our land, our home. We're determined to stay here."

I have seldom seen more sincerity in the eyes of people I have interviewed and there have been an awful lot of them over the years.

All three men are married, one has nine children, one three and the youngest is yet childless. All are *campesinos*, tillers of fields, among the most humble and, at the same time, proudest people of Central America.

Added a trainer: "They may not have much in the way of uniforms or even weapons, but their morale is sure as hell high and they're confident they can keep out the guerrillas."

One hopes he is right, because if there is war, this is the front line in El Salvador. The war will be won or lost in places just like Guadalupe. ☒

BLITZ ON THE DMZ

Marines Dig in for Garden Party in 'Nam

by Ernie Husted

OUR mission was a special one: We were going into the DMZ in Vietnam at a time when the North Vietnamese were denying they had any troops up there. It was common knowledge to almost everyone that the North Vietnamese *did* have troops and equipment in the "D," and periodically we sent up a few people to gather information on them.

The intelligence briefing we were given about our patrol area was truly brief: They had nothing to tell us. That's why we were going in to run a patrol. What we did know after looking at the map was that our area had nasty terrain.

First of all, there was only one place for the choppers to land. The spot was surrounded by a sheer cliff of 200 to 300 feet to the south. There were two extremely steep hills to the east and west. The only direction we could move was north. We all hoped the area wasn't as bad as it looked. Occasionally, the maps were wrong. One of the worst times our team had gotten lost was due to an inaccurate map.

There was some good news about the patrol. We were to have the usual air cover, plus some extra because we were going north. The usual was two "46" choppers to take us in (one to land us, the other to come in and get us if the first was shot down), two Huey ships to escort us, and a flight of Phantom jets in case we stepped into a bad situation on the ground.

Our extra was a Bronco. Broncos (OV-10s) were light observation planes which could fly fast and low. They carried four rocket pods, two on each side, and a few smoke rockets for marking enemy positions. The rest of the load was high explosives.



Blitz, the scout dog, had several confirmed kills before this patrol. Photo: Ernie Husted

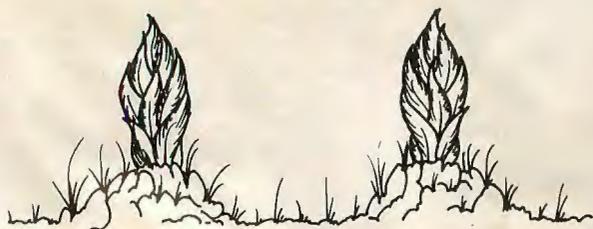
ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Ernie Husted joined the Marines in 1966 and went to 'Nam in '67, spending most of his time there with 3rd Recon Battalion, 3rd Marine Division, Bravo Company.

SOF Conventioneers attended Husted's seminars at the '82 and '83 conventions in Charlotte, N.C. and Las Vegas, respectively. He spoke on Khe Sanh, a place where he spent countless hours — both memorable and forgettable.

Regular SOF readers will remember Husted from his previous articles; this is his third story on his Vietnam adventures. "Rattus Non Gratus," an animal story of a different color, appeared first (see SOF, June '82), followed by "Ain't No One Else Around," in the October '82 SOF.

Loyal Husted fans may have seen this month's story when it appeared in *Leatherneck*. SOF thinks it's worth another run.
—Margaret McDonald



When you add four M60 machine guns and two crazy Marines who think they are fighter pilots, you have a real friend overhead. The planes, which flew observation, were also accurate close-support planes with some sting and a crew that loved to help.

It would have proven awkward and somewhat embarrassing if our team got into a mess someplace we weren't supposed to be, so we took along another extra — a dog. It was a German shepherd (not as large as many I've seen), golden-brown with patches of black all over. Even though he was lying quietly and patiently beside his handler, I wondered what would happen if the dog decided to bark or do something else noisy while on patrol, especially when we had to be absolutely quiet. Most of the team had the same reservation.

"Why do we have to take a dog out in the first place? We can do better without him."

The dog handler must have heard all this before, because he was ready with the answer. "First of all, this dog can see better than anyone else here, hear noises beyond the human range and smell the enemy long before you would ever know they were there."

"But we don't need a barking dog out there on patrol."

"You don't have to worry about him barking. He's a scout dog."

The handler spent the next couple of hours briefing us about the new canine member of the team and the difference between scout and sentry dogs. Sentry dogs were trained to guard military bases and keep the enemy out. Scout dogs were trained to find the enemy in the jungle and alert their handlers without making any noise.

Our scout dog's name was Blitz. If Blitz saw, heard or smelled the enemy, he would silently alert. This meant he would stop and face the direction of the enemy. He wouldn't bark or make any noise while in the jungle. That was the part we wanted to hear — *no noise!*

There were some dos and don'ts to be learned if we were to work with Blitz. We couldn't try to touch or pet him. If we did, he'd have his teeth full of us. We also couldn't touch the handler, or again, there would be teeth gnawing on us.

There was a special companionship between the handler and his dog. The dog tried to protect his man from anything and anyone. There were cases when a dog handler had been wounded, and the dog had to be wrapped up in a net so the handler could receive medical attention.

The handler carried his own food, water and weapon — plus food and water for the dog. If the dog couldn't walk in heavy growth, the handler carried him, too.

The team was taken outside the tent and given a demonstration of what Blitz could do. All commands to the dog were given with silent hand signals. Blitz would crawl, sit, roll over, wait, play dead, alert and attack on command. The attack was convincing.



When attacked by a big dog, people have a tendency to throw their hands in front of their faces. This was the wrong thing to do with Blitz, trained to grab much lower. The handler told us Blitz had several confirmed kills against the enemy. By the time the demonstration was over, we were glad to have both of them along on patrol.

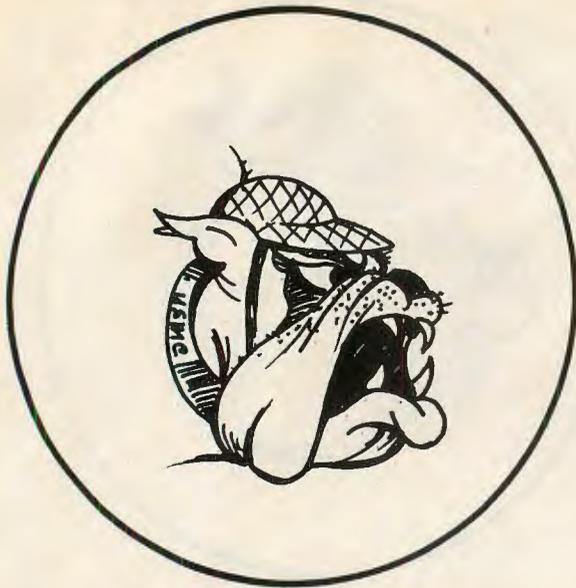
That night, Blitz and his handler slept with us in the tent so Blitz could get used to each team member's smell.

Before the lights went out, I noticed the team seemed especially nervous. One at a time they were taking most of their food out of their packs and replacing it with more ammunition. Less food could make you hungry, but being out of ammo could make you dead.

Around noon we were all on board the 46 on our way north. It didn't take too long before we were there. Our chopper went in slow, allowing us to get a bird's-eye view of the landing zone and surrounding area. When you got on the ground, it always looked so different. The idea was for the chopper to draw fire before we got out if the enemy were there.

The chopper started in and stopped about 10 feet from the ground to hover. We were getting anxious, waiting for the bird to set down, but there was a problem. Our clearing wasn't as open as it had looked from the air. There were tree stumps three or four feet high sticking up everywhere. The chopper couldn't touch down.





The crew chief motioned for us to go. Jumping or falling from a height of 10 feet isn't all that much fun, and doing it from a swaying helicopter with 60 or more pounds of gear was nothing to look forward to.

No one could say we hit the ground gracefully. I was on the edge of the hatch trying to talk my body, especially my feet, into stepping off, when the chopper jerked and out I went. . . .

The dog handler was the last one out of the helicopter, or should I say next to last? He hit the ground and then looked up at his dog. Blitz didn't want to jump, figuring he had more sense than us humans.

The handler kept yelling over the noise of the chopper for Blitz to jump. The dog was hesitant, but the chopper crew wasn't about to give him a push. They'd heard all about scout dogs and decided it was our problem. With a final look of hopelessness, Blitz jumped into his handler's arms and started licking him.

As the chopper lifted off, we spread out. After all the noise and confusion of an insert, it suddenly got quiet.

Now it was up to us to run our patrol. Blitz and his handler were out front, and we followed. Something didn't look right about our landing zone — it seemed too perfect. There was plenty of vegetation, but the plants were in neat rows and there were no weeds. Then it hit me. A *garden!* We were in a huge garden. Around us were peppers, beans and some type of squash, and corn was up ahead.

At the same moment, I realized we were in a garden, Blitz refused to move ahead. He wasn't alerting, but he wasn't moving. The handler picked him up and carried him a few steps, then tried to get him to walk. But Blitz wouldn't move north.

We couldn't see anyone, but landing in the middle of Uncle Ho's victory garden and Blitz's behavior convinced us we were in trouble.

When we tried to move east and then west, Blitz still wouldn't let us move on. The only way left to go was back to where we had landed, back toward the cliff.

Our patrol leader got out his binoculars and finally saw why Blitz wouldn't move. To the east and west, up on the sides of the hills, were the enemy. Blitz didn't alert because he didn't know which direction to alert first. On the hills were huts, bunkers, towers and trails. Intermittently, camouflaged netting would be pulled back and we could see the enemy looking and pointing down toward us. There was no way they could sneak up and surprise us, but there was nowhere we could go, either.

We tried to send a radio message back to the base, advising them of our situation, but they couldn't hear us. The cliffs and mountains around us blocked all radio signals. Being without radio contact could be a sticky situation.

All there was left to do was get ready for a fight. We spread out in a tight half circle and watched. No one could get behind us because of the cliff, but when it got dark the enemy could hit us and we wouldn't see them coming. We were hoping Blitz could give us that early warning.

I filled all my pockets with loose ammo and checked my pistol. There was just enough cover so we could see the enemy before they saw us. Sooner or later, the base would send an observation plane out to see why we hadn't reported back every hour.

I didn't think time could pass any slower than the first hour. I was wrong: The second hour was worse. I looked around at the team. Everyone was ready, quietly waiting. Blitz was nuzzling his handler as they lay.

Would the plane show up before the enemy decided to come down and weed their garden? Not having radio contact sure could make you feel all alone.

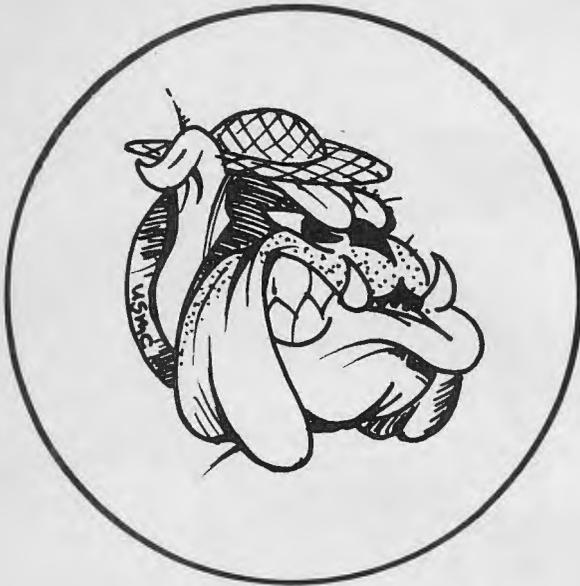
Time was passing slower than minutes could measure when, with a roar, the Bronco flew over the canyon walls and our radio came to life. "What's your status, Recon? Haven't heard from you."

No matter what happened, we weren't alone now. Our radio man quickly explained why we had no communication: We had landed in someone's garden and we could not move because we were surrounded on all sides. He didn't need to explain that nightfall was coming on.

Back at base they decided to pull us out. That was fine with us, but how? There wasn't time to schedule jets to cover us, so the choppers and Bronco would have to go it alone.

Our radio man started to brief the Bronco pilot about our landing zone, but he already knew. This was the same pilot





who had flown us in. The 46 and gunship pilots were also the same. That was great: They knew the area.

The helicopter pilots came on the radio and discussed the best way to come in. They still didn't think they could touch down because of the damage the tree stumps would do to the bellies of their birds. We, in turn, didn't know how we were going to crawl back on a chopper hovering 10 feet off the ground. The pilot decided to land with the nose of the 46 pointed north. The ramp we were to climb aboard on was toward the back. This way, the machine guns on the chopper could fire at some of the enemy positions.

With help on the way and overhead, we all started feeling pretty sure of ourselves. We dared the enemy to fire at us.

"Do you have any targets for me?" the Bronco pilot asked.

We told him about the enemy positions on both sides of the hills and that the LZ was unsecured and very hot. "Mark one for me," he replied.

We fired an M79 grenade round that hit right in front of the door of a big hut on the hill. "Roger, I see it. Keep your heads down, I'm coming in."

Swoosh — the rocket left the Bronco and flew right in the hut door and exploded, blowing out the walls and collapsing the roof. *Right in the door!* Fantastic. We were all yelling and cheering as we radioed the pilot to tell him.

"Plenty more where that came from. Just mark and call."

The 46 transport pilot came on the radio. "Get ready, we're coming in."

The chopper used full power as it rushed toward the ground. Suddenly, it stopped and was hovering just above the stumps. I couldn't understand why we hadn't been fired at by the enemy. I was hoping the rocket from the Bronco had given them something to think about.

The 46 continued to hover, swaying back and forth, trying to find a spot to set down. The Bronco and gunships kept diving at the hills.

The crew chief of the 46 stretched out on the ramp and tried to help us up, but no matter how hard we both tried, there was no way to get on. The crew chief talked into his throat mike and motioned us back. The chopper was hovering just above the tree stumps when the pilot cut back his power and dropped. There was the sound of wood splintering and metal scraping. The chopper slid sideways and then fell down, part way between the stumps.

The ramp of the chopper was only four feet off the ground now. This time the dog and handler were going on first. The rest of us were lying down, watching the hills. When Blitz was lifted on board, followed by his handler, the enemy opened up on both sides. Their gunfire was directed to keep us from getting on the chopper.

We opened up with everything we had. The boom of .50-caliber machine guns firing from the bird drowned out our fire. One at a time we ran to the 46 while everyone else kept firing.

The gunships started making passes and their machine guns were covering the hills. As fast as one of us was pulled on board, he would run to a window in the chopper, break it out and start shooting. The chopper gunners stayed cool as they swept their guns back and forth at the hills.

I was firing and reloading my shotgun as fast as possible. I could feel the heat coming through my gloves. All the recon on board were pouring fire from the windows, giving the rest time to get on.

When I was pulled on, there were no more. I had trouble standing because of all the empty casings rolling around on the chopper floor. Over the noise of our shooting, we heard the chopper try to lift off. The vibrations got louder till we thought the 46 would shake apart. Nothing. The stumps had the chopper in a vise. We kept firing, but I was starting to worry.

Suddenly, the east hill erupted in explosions that shook the chopper. It looked like the entire hill was going up. The Bronco pulled up after his rocket attack. The ground fire slowed up.

The 46 pilot slowed the chopper engines, then opened them up full force. The 46 shuddered, then finally pulled free. As we lifted off, the Bronco came in and blasted the west hill with rockets and did a victory roll as he pulled out. It felt great to be airborne and out. The whole pull-out had taken less than two minutes, but it seemed like *two* *life*-times.

We landed for a debriefing before going back to our home base at Quang Tri, and were met by a major and a captain. It seemed several newsmen were at the Command Operations Center (COC) and heard our radio conversations; they were waiting to talk to us.

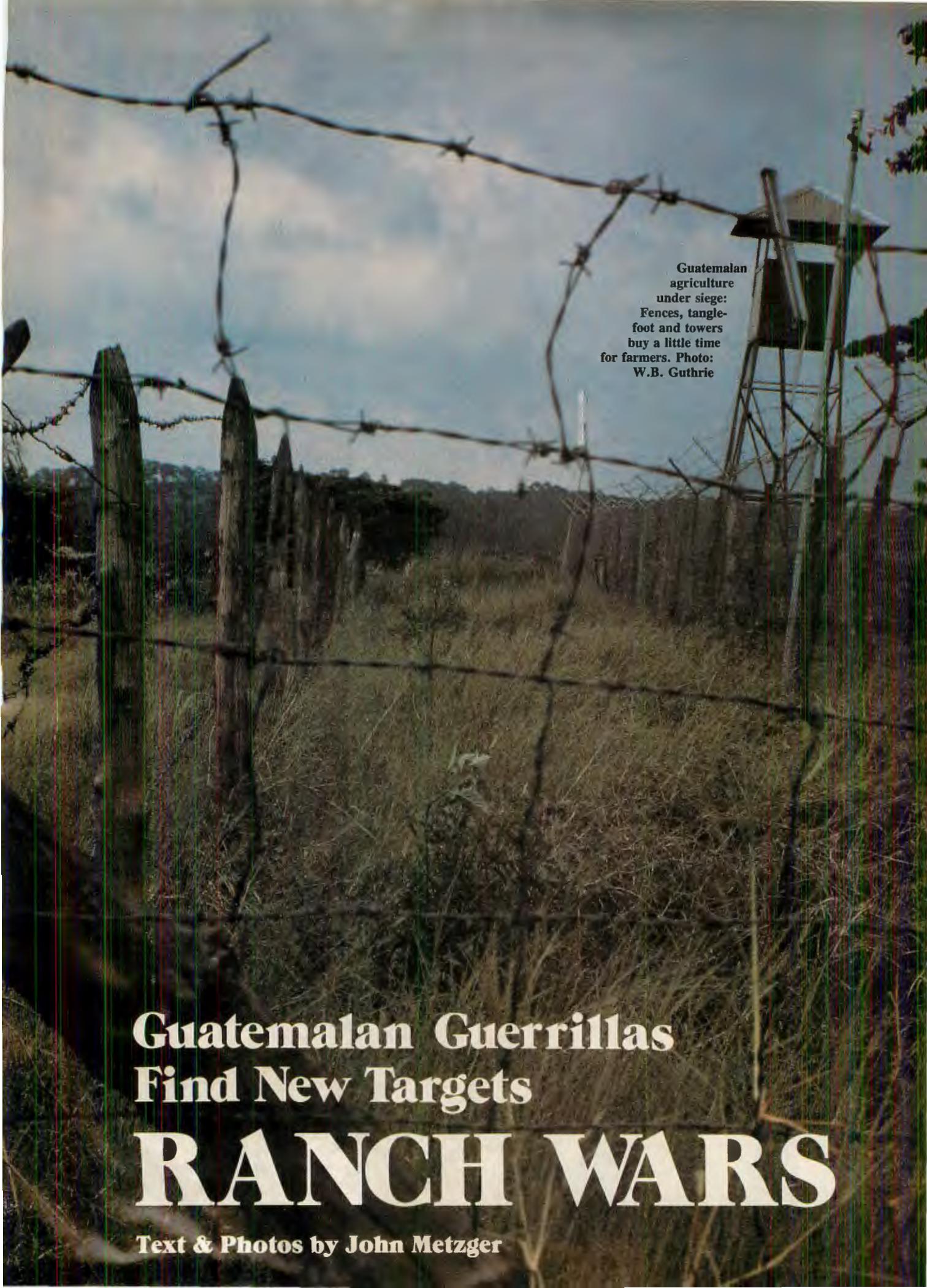
When we met the reporters, the first question we were hit with was, "Were you on patrol in the DMZ?" There was an awkward silence as none of the team said anything. Finally, the major spoke up and said, "Nope, right up to the border but never across it, isn't that right, men?"

Again, deafening silence as none of us spoke up. Before the question could be pursued any further, a reporter reached down to pet the dog. Instantly, he realized what a bad idea that had been.

We used that welcome interruption to go in and get our debriefing over with. By the time we were finished, the reporters were gone. They had their story about Blitz. We, in turn, headed back to the base by chopper with Blitz and his handler, glad they had been along for more than one reason.

Reprinted with permission from the February 1983 issue of Leatherneck magazine.





Guatemalan
agriculture
under siege:
Fences, tangle-
foot and towers
buy a little time
for farmers. Photo:
W.B. Guthrie

**Guatemalan Guerrillas
Find New Targets**

RANCH WARS

Text & Photos by John Metzger

GUATEMALA

THEY didn't hear us coming. A light rain drummed against ponchos, and our unshod horses made little noise except for the creaking of saddles. The two guerrillas looked up startled, then froze. They smiled quickly and innocently, as if we were all long-time-no-see buddies. They weren't going to run or try to shoot it out with four shotguns hovering over them from horseback. They knew what to do: Sit still and smile.

The two ranch-security guards reined horses to face them as I pulled ahead on the trail to see if they had any friends hiding in the sugar cane. Guthrie backtracked to cover our rear.

"We were working on a nearby farm and decided to take a break," one of the men said. But a guard pointed out that their machete was too dull and there were no other farms nearby. They were dressed more like they were going to disco than cut cane. One wore Guatemalan Army boots, the other had an army raincoat.

"We are looking for work on this farm," he tried again. But the main entrance was a few clicks away, countered the incredulous guard.

"We got lost," answered the nervous would-be laborer, smiling sheepishly.

"What's in that large white sack?" asked the security hand.

The suspect who was doing all the talking gingerly fished out a short cane stalk and smiled even wider as the security man snatched the sack and deftly let it slide away, revealing a Remington .22 caliber pump rifle. Its stock had recently been hacked off to the stock bolt.

Wary glances darted between patrol members. Guthrie and I clicked off safeties and circled our position. The security guards checked identifications and asked more questions. Finding nothing else and getting unsatisfactory answers to our questions, we trudged back to the ranch reaction room with the suspects leading the column.

"They are probably a recon team from town checking out possible access points to our farm," declared our patrol leader. "They obviously didn't expect a patrol to come by — they were completely surprised." We were asked not to take pictures, as the patrol passed through a sensitive and densely populated (for Guatemala) area — where urban meets rural and subversion seethes across cultures. Indeed, our fence line ran along the city limits of one of the most guerrilla-infested towns in Guatemala.

Back at patrol base, the chief security officer took the situation in hand. More questions. After a futile interrogation, the two smiling men were handcuffed and taken away.

Rain beat down, soaking us to the saddle as we continued our 12-mile patrol. Volcanoes loomed 10,000 feet overhead as we

thrashed through triple-canopy tropical rain forest. Vultures perched above the vine-choked trail, waiting out the rain and eyeballing us with that "Patience, my ass," look.

For two hot weeks in July, SOF Associate Editor Bill Guthrie and I observed and took part in Guatemala's back-burner war, where contacts with the enemy are few, but damage to life, liberty and property is great. Hit-run-and-hide terror tactics are a painful part of everyday life, and few civilians are left untouched by death, kidnapping or property destruction.

We visited several farms, ranches and mills, participating in foot, horse, vehicle, helicopter and airplane patrols and private-security-force weapons and tactics training. Some cautious landowners — who have either been the targets of terrorist violence and destruction, or have witnessed it on nearby farms — have established aggressive security programs to dissuade guerrilla raids on their lands, and are sticking to them. Guerrillas, much like burglars, might target one place, but if they encounter any obstacle at all — even a loose security system — they'll hit next door.

We passed through several of these "next-door" farms, owned by families who **Anxious children at site where 60-year-old farm manager was executed by fatigue-clad guerrillas.**

felt their money could be better spent elsewhere, rather than on something as "profitless" as security. Our interpreter pointed out sites where entire land-owning families had been executed or police lined up and shot.

And the guerrilla war in Guatemala has taken an alarming new twist. Guerrillas are now attacking the middle class because they are easier targets and more important for day-to-day operations in factories and on ranches than Guatemala's reclusive elite, whom they had targeted in the past. In the past year, the number of technicians, farm/ranch foremen and factory managers assassinated, and industrial machinery, vehicles and equipment destroyed has increased dramatically.

We talked with many farm owners and mid-management administrators whose families had been threatened or victimized by guerrilla raiders who kidnapped or killed family members. With few exceptions, all are now armed and trained in the art of practical pistol shooting. Guatemala is an IPSC hotbed.

Kidnappings occur regularly — almost daily — in all parts of Guatemala. In fact, the sister of then-President Rios Montt had been abducted the week we arrived. For guerrillas, kidnapping for ransom is a relatively low-risk activity and an excellent source of income.



WAR AGAINST GUATEMALAN MIDDLE CLASS

By W.B. Guthrie

I lay sweating on the warm concrete between the bunk and the cinder-block wall strangling my CAR-15. The place was strange to me and I couldn't remember how I got on the floor. With no idea why I was on the floor, it seemed important that I should not move. I didn't. Then I remembered I was in a ranch house at the edge of Guatemala's lowlands but I still did not know what had awakened me.

A thump more felt than heard introduced a hollow hiss like a big Roman candle. It sounded familiar, but I couldn't place it. Two seconds later an explosion moved hot, dark, wet air in waves . . . a mortar. Probably a 60mm. Slipping on shoes and checking the CAR-15's magazine, I listened for movement in the house. Two other *norteamericanos* were there. One was John Metzger. Shaken by the shoulder, John still slept. In the next room a U.S. ranch security adviser lay, also asleep.

Since no one else was alarmed, and the rounds hit — from the sound — at least a couple of thousand yards away, it seemed reasonable to look around before panicking. Every two to four minutes another blast shook the darkness in the direction of town.

Outside there was no shouting and no sound of small-arms fire. It didn't sound like a fire fight. It sounded like a lost samurai studying Zen archery with a 60mm mortar at 0300 hours.

I walked out on the road, sticking close to the brush grown into the barbed-wire fence along the ditch. Nobody else was wandering about in the rain-wet gloom, so I went back to the house, doused myself with bug-dope and went to bed. The barrage kept falling like drops from a leaky faucet.

A couple of hours later we rose and prepared for the dawn patrol of guard houses controlling the roads leading in and out of the area's biggest and best-guarded *finca* (farm). I asked the Yankee security adviser about the noise the night before.

He shook his head. "You know, if I follow this profession anywhere else, sleeping through that shit's gonna kill me. Someday, I'm gonna sleep through a mortar attack and die. Goddamn fireworks."

"Fireworks?"

"Yeah. The Guatemalans shoot 'em off all the time. When they really celebrate they've got one — you wouldn't believe it — that sounds *exactly* like a heavy mortar."

"Why do they do it?"

"Political rallies, holidays, kids'



A hard day at the office: shotgun- and pistol-toting Guthrie relaxes after long but profitable horse patrol.

birthdays . . . nearly any excuse."

When we went out on patrol, I salvaged enough Colorado construction-worker Spanish to ask a road guard why there had been a party the night before.

"*La fiesta de los Santos Pedro y Pablo*," he grinned. It had been a pretty good party. The 29th of June is always like that.

It sounds funny, here in the United States. But in Guatemala, the restrained coup that finally deposed Rios Montt was in progress, civil rights had been curtailed, government and guerrilla roadblocks chopped up the country, the president's sister had been kidnapped and the happy peasants enjoyed a *fiesta* straight out of a 1930s Duncan Reynaldo flick. Complete with explosives.

How can they laugh at such danger?

That answer is easier than you think: They are not immediately endangered. The farmers, coffee-sorters, weavers and cane-cutters know the army wants to protect them and the guerrillas have no hatred for them. The lower classes know that they themselves are the prize of war in Guatemala, not the enemy.

The modern history of Guatemala is one of entirely-to-nearly bloodless coups punctuated by honest-to-God popular elections bringing in a succession of pendulum-swinging moderate-left to moderate-right governments. And, of course, there was the U.S.-assisted anti-communist incursion in 1954 which installed Col. Carlos Castillo Armas as head of state. Guatemala has not been torn between the same political extremes as has most of the Third World.

This relative political stability has made resource-poor Guatemala one of

the healthiest and most stable of Third World economies. An administrative middle class is the result of past success and foundation of recent success. Farm managers, office managers, plant managers and foremen actually run the *fincas* on a day-to-day basis. The administrative middle class is the target of the new guerrilla strategy.

We saw where a plant manager had been shot. We talked to a farm manager who had been caught at a guerrilla roadblock, held for three hours, beaten and interrogated. (As his wife was marshalling the security people to find him, he finally managed to talk his way out, explaining he was an agricultural-equipment salesman.) *Finca* shops modify managers' cars by blocking windows shut and doubling them with bullet-proof glass sheet, reinforcing doors and panels with stainless-steel plate, welding bar stock to bumpers to make rams and bolting on easy-access shotgun racks.

The guerrillas are still burning remote fields and destroying unsecured coffee dryers and sugar mills. But we heard no reports and saw no evidence of assaults on farms with security systems. The *fincas* have become better protected in the last three or four years. A few companies have even hired expensive U.S. and Israeli advisers.

But this is coming to an end. There is no reason for security if there is no profit to protect. Guatemala has little mineral wealth and only light industry. It imports most of its petroleum, machinery and grain products. When coffee, sugar, cotton and banana prices are down, there is no money to buy weapons, ammunition or barbed wire — or to pay for advisers. The farms are bound to become softer targets as the agricultural economy weakens.

As the world economy makes Guatemala's products worth less, the guerrillas take advantage of instability to deprive the country of its means to support itself. They burn crops, destroy factories and kill or intimidate work-force organizers.

The guerrillas are not crippling the Guatemalan economy: They are parasites attacking a weakened organism. The erosion of Guatemala's world markets is accidental, and they may grow again. Burnt fields will grow back. Farm-owned mills are generally simple and can be rebuilt with available materials and labor. The one thing that is hard to replace is the administrative class.

Meanwhile, the workers and small farmers shoot fireworks. They do not worry because they do not think they are threatened. But the workers and farmers are mistaken. They are as mistaken as *norteamericanos* who believe they are not endangered by the imported revolutions of Central America. ☒

GUATEMALA



A wealthy coffee and cane farmer, whom we'll call Enrique, described his own abduction by the guerrillas in the early '70s: "When I was kidnapped, the ransom was \$75,000," he said. "But I was rescued before my family paid the ransom because I was guarded by 10 heavily armed men, a method which made my abductors look suspicious in my village. I was saved just in time, however, because the guerrillas had shot me in the leg during the abduction and my leg had developed gangrene. I was nearly dead."

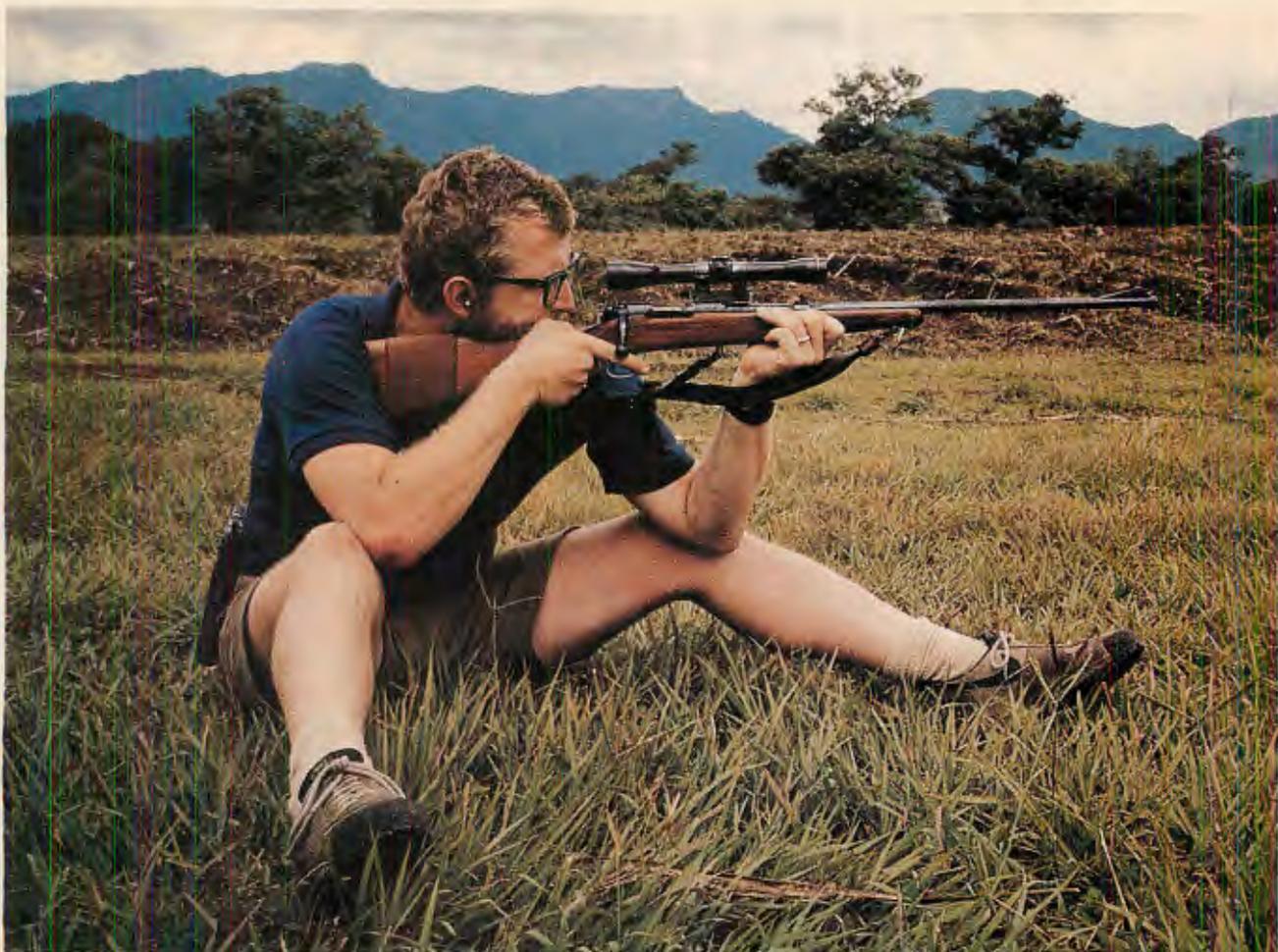
Today, ransoms are routinely \$5 million and more, and guerrillas often throw a victim down a well with a can to piss in, slide a rock over the top and guard it with one woman. This makes it almost impossible to detect hideouts and rescue kidnap victims. Guatemalan guerrillas are becoming more professional and are using more sophisticated tactics in their abductions.

While patrolling the countryside for guerrilla spoor, we saw our share of destroyed farms and mills and massacre sites. It became clear to us that the rebels are *not* interested in social reform nor improving the quality of life for Guatemalans — nor in land reform. And, unlike the government, the guerrillas haven't shown any intention of giving the Indian population a fair shake.

The guerrillas' goals and motives are pragmatic: They need to fill their ranks so

ABOVE: Big *fincas* have some facilities for security training: John Metzger blows down metal silhouettes with Remington 1100. **BELOW:** *Ladino* security forces guard their own interest in Guatemalan agriculture. These guards patrolled with Guthrie and Metzger when guerrillas were caught. Photos: W.B. Guthrie





ABOVE: Bill Guthrie relaxes at 300-meter mark during firing session on 1000-meter airstrip *cum* snipers' range. **BELOW:** Metzger and Guatemalan ranch guard return from horse patrol. Photo: W.B. Guthrie

they try to coerce Guatemalans into joining them. That's Phase I. Phase II is to get the people to provide them with safehouses and supplies. They have not been successful at Phase I. So to attain Phase II, without the popular support Phase I should have provided, the guerrillas have resorted to killing people in authority, such as policemen, civil officials, teachers, etc.

This action, of course, brought in the government troops. And, sadly, more people died. Then, along came Jimmy Carter and his human-rights crowd. Thanks to his embargo of military assistance to Guatemala, the army has been left to deal with a burgeoning problem with insufficient troops and equipment, which ironically is often U.S.-made but with no spare parts for maintenance or repairs. Remarkably, under Rios Montt's bullets-and-beans program, the army had been dealing with the guerrillas with marked success and had shown improvement in its human-rights record. Though, of course, the violations had not been eliminated entirely.

Meanwhile, the guerrillas, aware that their always-limited support was being eroded even further, stepped up their violent activities against the middle class and have killed more people in their march against capitalism — without any concern for human-rights commissions.

Offering Marxism as an excuse for apolitical murder and pillage, some guerrillas have taken advantage of ancient Indian rivalries and have pitted tribes against tradi-

tional enemies. They have been particularly successful with this tactic in the highland areas of Quiche and Totonicapan, homes of the last surviving Mayan kingdoms. Many of the alleged government human-rights violations were actually committed by Indians fighting each other. Or by Indian raiding parties led by guerrillas in army cammies.

The guerrillas are smart. They say: "Look what the government did!" And groups like Amnesty International eat it up. Unfortunately, U.S. press coverage is generally sparse as there are no full-time Western news agencies based in Guatemala City. Both AP and UPI, for example, use local stringers. As a matter of fact, the only Western correspondent in town at the time of the would-be coup in June was SOF's Bob Poos, who was in country covering Guatemala's bullets-and-beans program. Others came rushing in from bases in Managua, San Salvador and San Jose the following day.

The original Castro-sponsored revolution fomented in Guatemala's western mountains in the early '60s, but failed because most local citizens owned their land and were conservative. The communists couldn't get any support from those people, especially after the government provided weapons to western mountain landowners (chalk one up for civilian possession of firearms and the M1 Carbine).

Continued on page 118



In the wreckage of the coffee-dryer his grandfather built, Enrique tells John Metzger what he found when he came home the week before. Photo: W.B. Guthrie



GETTING THE DROP ON CHARLIE

Colt Commando Shines on Hot LZ

by Clarence Blackwelder

I had just finished cleaning my Commando (XM177E1) when we got word to saddle up. A large force of NVA were reported en route northwest of the Rock Pile, and 3rd Recon got the orders to locate them. It was late in the afternoon and would be dusk before we touched ground.

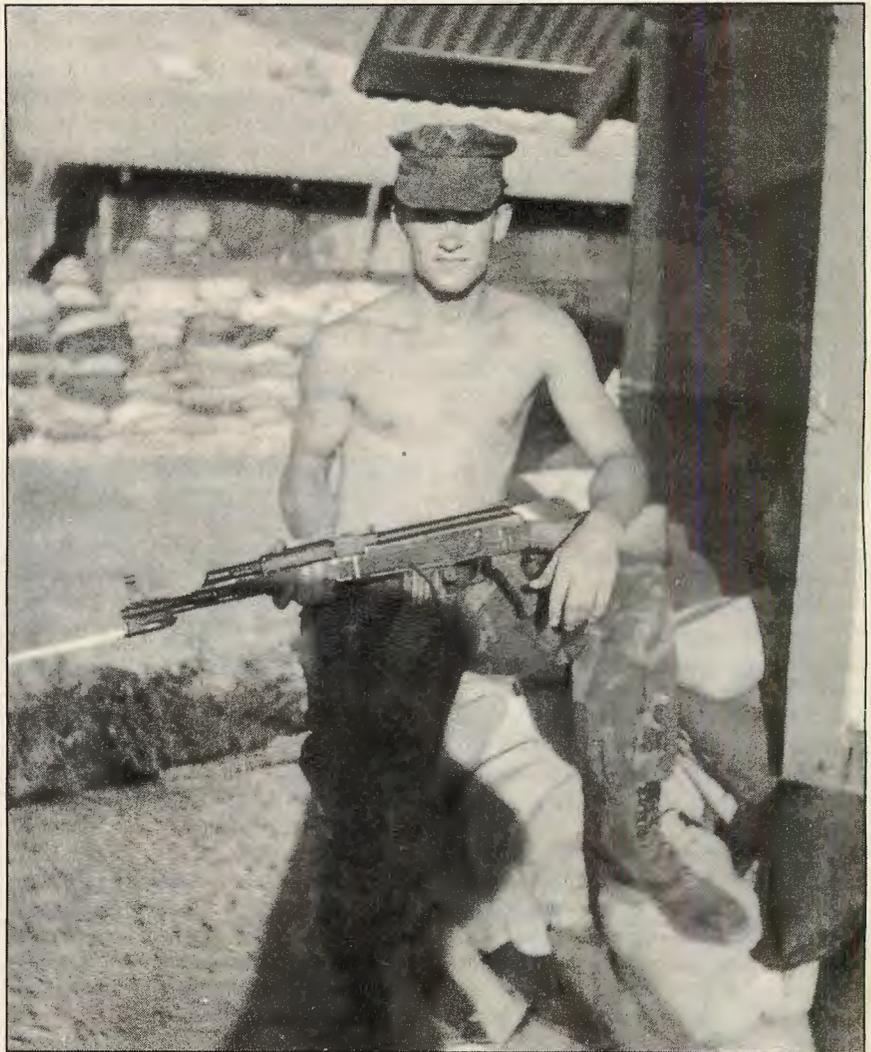
Our '46 made one circle and dashed for the LZ (landing zone) while the Cobra circled at a distance. As soon as we cleared the chopper, we headed for some dense growth 100 meters away. The chopper had dropped us off in eight-foot-high elephant grass, which reduced visibility to three feet. With 50 meters to go, a deafening explosion and intense AK fire erupted to our right.

Two of our team were slightly wounded but they continued to fire and make way to our designated area. The base was informed that we had made contact with a large NVA force and needed evacuation immediately. Running point position, I only had a few meters to go before reaching the dense growth, which would supply us with some cover.

Suddenly to my right, about 15 feet, two NVA were running parallel with me toward the same growth. The NVA soldier nearer to me spotted me about the same time. Being a lefty, the muzzle of my Commando was pointing toward the NVA soldiers. Two rapid shots caught the nearer NVA in the chest and left shoulder.

The second NVA had his AK on the safe position; I could tell because I heard the distinct clank as he moved it to full auto, one of the many faults of the AK system. At the same time, I had flipped my Commando to full auto and fired half a magazine; enough of the bullets found their target. The NVA got one burst off from his AK but did not have time to get his muzzle in my direction.

After everyone reached the designated area, the Cobra overhead emptied its ordnance on the remaining NVA. While arty was being called in on the NVA positions, Bob (our grenadier) and I crawled out to the two NVA I had killed earlier. We removed all weapons and gear from the dead soldiers and checked their wounds. I had placed the two rounds in the first soldier's K-zone on semiauto. The second NVA soldier looked like he had stepped in front of a 106mm; at least 10 rounds from my Commando on full



Author at "home" (circa 1969) at Dong Ha, Vietnam, with Kalashnikov — which he says was Soviet AK despite Chinese Type-56 folding spike bayonet — taken from first killed NVA.

auto had hit him in the upper chest, neck and head.

Then we returned to our former position to join the fire fight. Twenty minutes later the NVA broke contact and we were told to hold our position. At dawn we were extracted and First Battalion Ninth Marines, would sweep the area. Heavy contact was

made with the NVA and lots of munitions captured.

Several months later, our recon team was back in the same area but ran into no resistance. Approximately 1,000 meters from where I had killed the two NVAs, we found a skull sitting on a rock with a helmet and a shirt. The skull had three bullet holes like the head of the NVA I had shot with my Commando. I can't swear it's the same NVA, but I like to think so.

The light recoil and stability of the Commando on automatic fire gave me the edge over the two NVA with AKs. ✕

SUB-MARINE

Underwater Training for Force Recon

by David Bilodeau

THE cold is something you get used to—at least that's what the chief told us, as we boarded the submarine *Sea Lion*. We immediately stowed our gear and crawled into the tiered racks in order to make room for the crew as they flittered about the boat checking wiring and gauges, and twisting and turning endless valves and knobs—the new guys forever checking and marking the clipboards that seemed to be extensions of their arms.

I never did get used to the cold or dampness myself, though, nor to the creaks, groans and other strange noises the outside pressure generated on the hull as it prodded and poked, trying to find a weak spot to pop open and send everything outside inside whenever the skipper brought his boat down to the 300-or-so-foot mark. Not exactly being shipboard types, surface or otherwise, we couldn't wait to get into the trunk and lock-out into the clear-blue, warm Caribbean.

It took upward of 21 months to complete a full training cycle back in the baby days of Force Reconnaissance Company (Marine Corps intelligence-gathering unit), and Sub-Ops (Submarine Operations) was an integral part of that training; our means of entry into our assigned zones was either by sea, air or a direct penetration through the lines.

Our home in those days consisted of a few cinder-block buildings (heads and showers separate) at Camp Gieger, a satellite base seven miles south of Camp Lejeune, N.C. Besides a small contingent of a "Comm" Company, and boots fresh out of Parris Island, pulling their one-month stint at the Infantry Training Regiment, we had the place just about to ourselves, which was fine with us.

It was especially fine with our Company Gunny (operations sergeant and God Almighty), who, while we went about our daily routines, seemed to be everywhere at once and, being an old hand, never missed a thing. A fair but firm individual, he would deliver a discourse on the evils of sluffing off, when he caught you the first time. However, the Gunny was heavy of fist, and being caught a second time, the guilty soul was left in a state of disarray, and made a secret pact with himself never to be caught again. I say this from experience.

On this particular day, we had just returned from the New London sub base. The previous week we had undergone the required time in the recompression chamber there. A Navy diver took us down to the 60-foot depth and held us there for two minutes, while we breathed pure oxygen. Then he took us back up to the surface, where we held for a minute, and then back down again, this time to the 120-foot level, as fast as the slowest man could equalize. Here, we remained for 10 minutes. After resurfacing, we entered the 120-foot tower, where we completed the mandatory buoyant ascents, a prerequisite to sub training (simulated ascents from the escape trunk of a submarine).

FORCE RECON (Ret.)

David P. Bilodeau did 20 years in the USMC, retiring as a 1st Sergeant. A graduate of Force Recon, Bilodeau is an experienced diver and parachutist. This is his premier appearance as a writer. He lives in Andrews, N.C.

Immediately after checking in, we started loading our gear necessary for the move to St. Thomas, down in the Virgin Islands, and six grueling weeks of long-distance swims, stationary and underway lock-outs and lock-ins, patrolling and day/night water jumps. Most of us looked forward to this phase of our training, and although there were to be days and nights of hard physical and mental exertion in store for us, there were also the thoughts of liberty in Charlotte Amalie and the outlying islands.

Our base of operations, the UDT barracks (void of sailors) alongside the sub moorings, would be our permanent command post for the duration of our stay. After settling in, and being given the usual briefing as to what we could expect during the first and second weeks, we ambled over to our makeshift bar, had a few beers and called it a day. Monday would come 'round early.

At 0430 the next morning, we were formed up in front of the barracks, and led in 30 minutes of PT by the boss, after which we topped off the start of our day with a 30-minute run. This became a daily routine when we were not on the boat or on the never-ending patrols.

Our first swim was a short 1,500-meter, get-acquainted affair, but before I go further, allow me to explain the rules. Ours were not your everyday recreational swims. Our gear consisted of a set of fins, face mask, snorkel, standard over-the-head life vest, with one and a half puffs' of air (and don't get caught cheating), and a K-BAR (knife) with attached day/night flare. Any shiny objects (dog tags, face-mask clamp, etc.) were, of course, taped so as not to attract "Benny" up for a grab with those toothy jibs. "Benny" was our euphemism for the barracuda, up to eight-feet-long, that abounded in those waters, and swam just below us during most of our daylight swims. During these swims, we were allowed one splash, and that was when we entered the water from the pier. We swam in pairs, at four- to five-minute intervals, arms extended along the sides of our bodies or wherever one wished to place them, so long as they did not break the surface, and that went for the fins as well. The only part of the body allowed above the surface was head from the center of the facemask up. Two safety boats—one containing the Gunny and his driver; the other, the operations officer and his driver—continually criss-crossed the length of the column, and, should they spot arms or fins out of the water, the offender would be "graciously" told to transfer the fins to his hands and finish his swim. Try it sometime! Fortunately, my sneaky partner and I never got caught: a "boo-boo" on the Gunny.

On the longer swims, the safety boats would come alongside and issue the teams a tablespoon of honey, to build up the energy supply. However, if any part of the body touched that boat, accidentally or on purpose, while receiving the honey, the heavies would, with a smile that would melt the most hardened ladies of dubious occupations, graciously help both team members into the boat and return them to the starting place, dump them on the beach and allow them to start all over. It mattered not which partner was guilty, both went back. The first "boo boo" may have been the Gunny's, but the next three were ours. Guess we started one of those swims at least three times, after one of our more festive nights out in the ville.

The distance swims, although grueling



Photo: DPT

and sometimes maddening during incoming or outgoing tides (up to eight hours in the water), were also a treat for the eyes, as any who have swum those waters can verify. The water is crystal-clear, and the seabed has an indescribable beauty all its own — also an indescribable terror all its own, sharks. Sharks rule the undersea world like kings, as we found out during our six-week stay. Actually, my partner and I were lucky: We had only three close encounters with these murderous monarchs. Other teams had more.

The first encounter came on our last conditioning swim. My partner and I were tooling along on the second half of a four-miler, when I felt his touch. Turning, I saw him gesturing like a crazy person off to his left — and there they were, three of the meanest-looking creatures you ever saw. The sharks kept pace with us for maybe 10 minutes or so, and then started to circle.

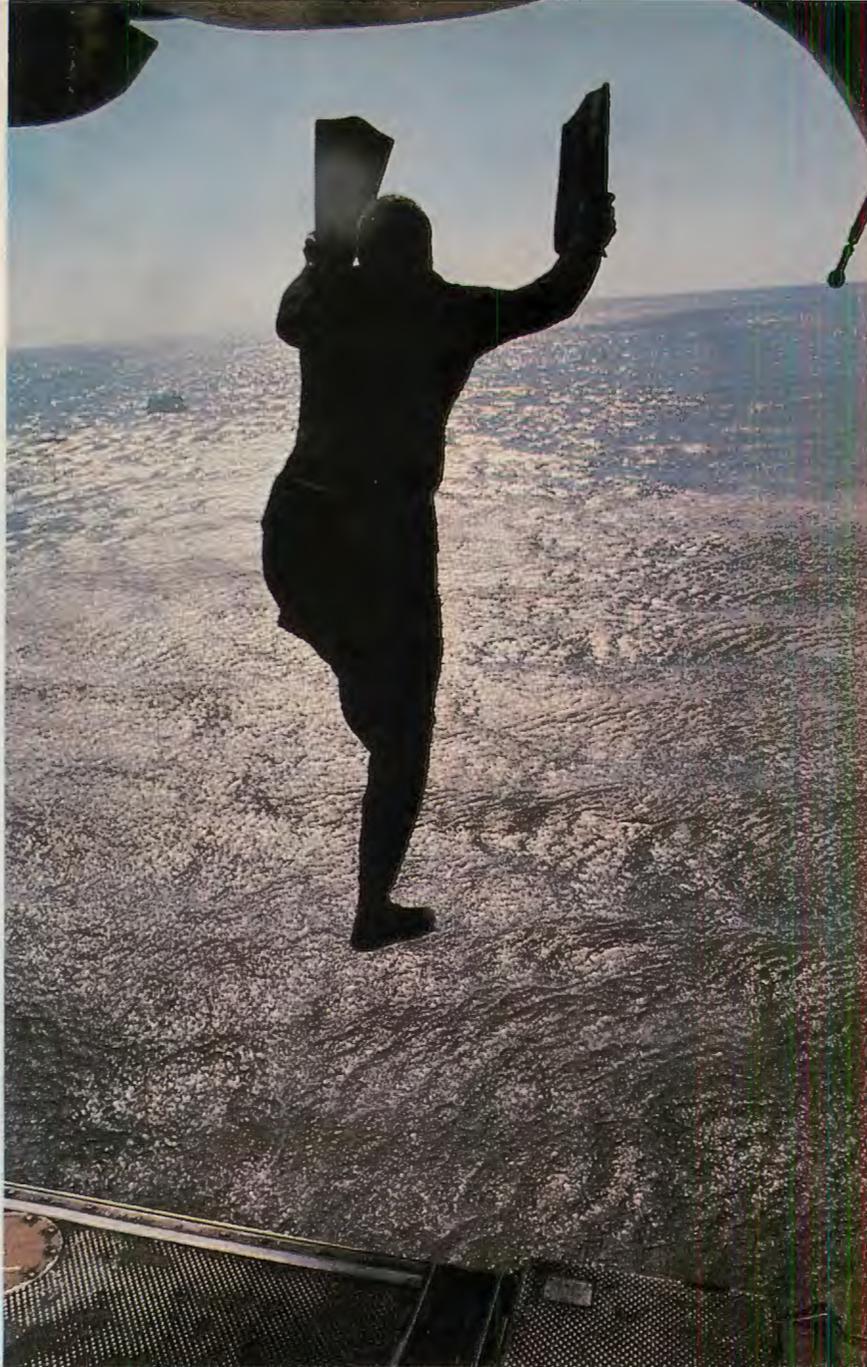
At this time, we started swimming back to back, so as to keep them in sight. When the circles started getting smaller, we popped the smoke-half of our day/night flares, both to keep them at a distance and alert the safety boat that we were in trouble. Looking up to see where the boat was, we saw other plumes of red smoke in front of us. There must have been a shark school swimming by.

Believe me, there is nothing more cage-rattling than waiting for a safety boat while *knee-deep* in sharks. Fortunately, no one was attacked, and while being taken back to the beach — two other teams and us — there was much bravado about what would have happened to those toothy creeps had they come any closer. After giving them a good head start, we re-entered the water for the second half of our swim.

The second encounter was not as innocuous and it shattered our morale. It came in the third week of our training. We were undergoing another phase of our water work, surf observations and beach recon. During this phase, six or seven teams would be stretched out in as even a line as possible at 25-yard intervals, the senior team in the center. On a visual command of the senior man, we would skin down to a depth of 25 feet, and work in toward the beach at 10- to 15-yard intervals on each dive. While one member of the team recorded any obstacle we encountered, with the aid of slate and grease pencil tied round his neck, the other would watch for any signs of danger — fish or human.

On this particular day, we were working in Magens Bay, a horseshoe-shaped area about 150 yards wide, and maybe three times that from open water to the beach. The bay, with its palms, snow-white sands, blue-green water and continual soft breeze drifting in off the open sea, lulls one into forgetting about the danger lurking below the surface. We were reminded quickly!

A Navy lieutenant, on leave from the States with his fiancée, decided to swim across the bay to impress his sweetheart and so, while she stood on the opposite side of the bay, the lieutenant foolishly entered the



ABOVE: High-altitude jumps require 'chutes, but Marines wear tanks alone for low-altitude chopper-drops. Photo: Rick Venable **BELOW:** Trained for entry and exit with wide variety of air- and water-craft, Recon teams spend a lot of time getting in and out of rubber rafts. Photo: D.P.T.



Other crew members were allowed to keep only five jugs each and the rest was confiscated and dumped over the side. At 1600, we had a team of four sitting on the bottom, under each of the minesweepers, in SCUBA gear, ready to scarf up the dumped goodies and tote them away in our trusty laundry bags.

water all alone. No one paid any attention as the lieutenant crawled his way across the bay toward his lady, until we heard the first scream and saw the aquamarine water turn bright red. Magens Bay, being a popular tourist and local beach, sported a life guard, a salty Australian, who, with the aid of a few troops, had his boat in the surf, and out to the lieutenant in record time.

Unfortunately, the shark was working in record time, also. On the first bite, the lieutenant lost the calf of his leg, and as he was being dragged into the boat, the shark jumped out of the water, bit down on his buttock and peeled the skin off down to just behind the knee joint. A combination of shock and loss of blood quickly killed the young lieutenant.

Needless to say, after witnessing this tragedy and with still three weeks to go in our training program, none of us were too excited about entering the water, even after the shark was captured with the aid of a 50-gallon drum, a dead goat and a flotation device. He was identified as the guilty fish by remains of the lieutenant still in his stomach. However, although our morale was definitely shaky, we were being paid to do a job — which we did — but our alert level went up about 15 clicks!

The tragedy described above was not typical of our experiences at St. Thomas, thank God. There were plenty of good times, too.

Take, for instance, the "great underwater caper." Sometime after we arrived on the island, two minesweepers pulled in and tied up at the two piers farthest from the barracks. Shortly, two not-so-happy sailors came strolling down the road to our area. After inviting them in for "refreshments" and a three-year-old movie, they unfolded their tale of woe. Seems they had this demented captain who believed he was Jesus Christ and his officers were the disciples who sat with him during the Last Supper. That was ridiculous, of course, because our Gunny was the true Messiah, and so being, had an idea to cheer up the woebegone sailors.

Customarily, during their stops in various ports, anyone who wished went ashore and loaded up on duty-free booze to take back to home port. However, the senior officer aboard the sweeps (a.k.a. Jesus Christ) had other ideas: He believed his officers (disciples) were the only ones allowed to take back more than customs allowed. Other crew members were allowed to keep only five jugs each and the rest was confiscated and dumped over the side.

At 1600, we had a team of four sitting on the bottom, under each of the minesweepers, in SCUBA gear, ready to scarf up the

dumped goodies and tote them away in our trusty laundry bags. And right at 1630, as stated by the swabs, the "rains" came. Jug after jug, like manna from heaven. How many trips were made back and forth hauling the contraband, I can't recall, but it was more than a few. When the dumping was over, the sailors came down to our place. Laughing, they told us the officers couldn't understand why the crew was smiling as they dumped the booze over the side. This happened on Thursday. Our swims and beachwork over, we had till Monday at 1630 before boarding the sub.

Early Friday morning, the Gunny organized a diving team, whose job it was to bring in as many langusta (clawless lobster) as they could find. Other teams were formed to gather other delicacies from town and countryside. When the whole mess was put together late Friday afternoon, there was a party that would have warmed the cold heart of the great stone Buddha himself — but not the ships' officers.

Once the divers were inside, the hatch, located on the bottom of the trunk, was closed and dogged.

At 0430 Monday of our third week, we were on the pier, loading the gear necessary for the first of our two weeks on board the *Sea Lion*, a pre-WWII diesel boat and gallant lady of many missions. The Gunny, a teetotaler, was at his perverted best this particular morning. As most of us moved about as quietly as we could, and sucked up the pure oxygen from tanks lashed to the sides of the conn, trying to quiet the imps, gnomes and other toady things that were running roughshod inside our heads from the weekend, this evil person was doing his undaunted best to keep them riled up. Lovely people, Gunnies.

The old diesel was a compact machine, and for anyone prone to claustrophobia, was no place to be. As soon as we boarded, we climbed into our assigned racks and started preparing ourselves mentally for our first few turns in the trunk. Unlike the Super Subs, the diesels were cramped, cold and damp. And when not moving to the mess deck (in shifts), or going to the head, we were required to remain in our assigned berthing, so as not to interfere with the crew as they performed their never-ending tasks.

Chow time was the one enjoyable occasion on board. The food was out-of-this-world, and the cook received many compliments before we left.

The head was another experience altogether. Although we were instructed in the mechanics of operating the commode, some of us did not master the technique. In order to flush the can, one had to step on the pedal, push a lever and pull another — hopefully in the right sequence; if not, instead of flushing, it geysered up and some unfortunate sailor wore the contents, from waist up. After the first episode, I waited till I was out in the water before I did my thing.

While moving away from the pier and out into open water, the submarine is like any other surface craft. However, once under the surface, it's like being on dry land: no feel of rotation at all, just the continuous hum of what keeps it going. Getting under the surface is something else again. For a short period, there is a kaleidoscope of sound — Klaxons, running feet, shouted orders and the squeaking of valves.

Before I go further, I wish to pay my respects to the skipper, Capt. Bill, one hell of a fine man, and the only captain I ever saw take his boat into port wearing full-dress whites and Mickey Mouse ears while standing on the conn issuing orders. I also wish to mention the crew. Submarine duty is a hazardous and scary occupation. Those folks are definitely at the mercy of the sea, which offers few refuges from mistakes. I have a healthy respect for a sub sailor and can understand why he wears his "Dolphins" with pride.

During our stationary phase of lock-out/ins, the boat sits on the bottom with 30 or 40 feet of water between the deck plates and the surface. Two of our company divers would position themselves on the deck plates above the trunk. They ensured that we had no air in our lungs prior to heading for the surface. The divers, once in place, would bang on the hull with their K-BARs to inform the back-up team inside that they were in position; a team would then enter the trunk.

Once the divers were inside, the hatch, located on the bottom of the trunk, was closed and dogged. Four warm bodies were crammed into an enclosure no bigger than a telephone booth, with a small red light the only source of illumination. On the forward side of the trunk, facing the bow of the boat, was another hatch about 36-inches round, known as the side door, our exit and entrance to the great outdoors.

Once inside the trunk, when the team

Continued on page 121

RAID INTO ANGOLA

SADF Airborne Abridges SWAPO Supply Line

Text & Photos by Kenneth J. Gaudet

Two of the UNITA camp's youngest children, ages 10 and 11, with 7.62mm Hungarian AMD.



UPPER RIGHT: "Saber" Land Rover used by raiding party. Twin MAG machine guns are mounted in rear, with single MG for co-driver.

As a member of the South African Defense Force, I had the opportunity to work with the pro-Western UNITA troops in Angola. The UNITA (National Union for the Total Liberation of Angola) men were fighting FAPLA (Army of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Angola), the Russian/Cuban-trained army of Angola. FAPLA is known to give aid and arms to SWAPO (South West African People's Organization), a terrorist group

fighting to take over South West Africa, which they call Namibia.

My particular unit was the Pathfinder Company of the South African Parachute Brigade. I joined the unit at its formation in September 1980. The outfit was 90-percent foreigners, from the United States, Britain, Australia, Rhodesia, France and Canada. The men were veterans of the Rhodesian Light Infantry (RLI), Rhodesian and British Special Air Services (SAS), U.S. Special

Forces, British Paratroops and even French Foreign Legion.

Our mission in Angola was twofold:

(1) Destroy the main culvert bridge between Ongiva and Mangua on the hard-surfaced road, thereby denying access for any more supplies getting to FAPLA and SWAPO bases.

(2) Engage and destroy any convoys coming down the road, capture any enemy equipment and, if possible, recover any bodies of foreign personnel advisers,



RIGHT: UNITA personnel pose with ex-Rhodesian from raiding party. Weapons are Spanish-made 7.62mm CETME assault rifles.



i.e., Russians, Cubans or East Germans. We were to use UNITA forces inside Angola as guides and extra strike forces if available.

Our raiding party consisted of five vehicles: two Land Rover gun jeeps (Sabers) with twin 7.62mm MAG machine guns for the gunner and his assistant, and one machine gun for the co-driver; one 1½-ton vehicle with a 14.5mm heavy machine gun, captured from SWAPO terrorists and used by our

troops; and two 2½-ton vehicles to carry troops and demolition equipment with one mounted 7.62mm MAG.

As soon as all equipment and personnel were ready, we began organizing and rehearsing to take out the bridge and any convoy we encountered.

Current intelligence reports and aerial photos were brought in for our demo man to study as he organized equipment to destroy the bridge. We were to use approximately 400 pounds of explosives,

and supports had to be prepared to keep the explosives tight against the bridge.

Our headquarters wanted us to experiment with a new epoxy substance for sticking the explosive to the bridge. We tried the epoxy many times, but it was a complete failure. We finally improvised and made metal supports with which to hang our explosive boxes.

The latest intelligence reports said convoy movement was currently between 2400 and 0500 hours. Because of



RIGHT: South African troopies man Russian 14.5mm heavy machine gun, captured from SWAPO terrorists.



constant South African plane attacks, daylight travel for FAPLA and SWAPO was impossible.

During our three-day rehearsal, we practiced battle formation. First in the convoy was the Saber vehicle and second the 2.5 truck carrying our UNITA guides and personnel. Next was the other 2.5 vehicle with explosives and equipment. I was on the third vehicle, the 1.5 with 14.5mm heavy machine gun (Russian). The final position was another Saber Land Rover.

We practiced the actions we would take once we reached the bridge over and over. Rehearsals lasted day and night. Potential mistakes were corrected and we went over essential tactics until everything went as planned. The most important drills taught the split-second

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

SOF readers will recall Kenneth Gaudet's first contribution to SOF in our November '82 issue. His article, "Big Magic," was about the AKM bayonet, a favorite souvenir of Rhodesian Army security forces.

Highly decorated after serving with the 173rd Airborne Brigade (Separate) in Vietnam (1970-71), Gaudet found himself in Africa with the Rhodesian Light Infantry and South African Parachute Brigade. He fought with them in Mozambique, Zambia, South West Africa and Angola.

This month, Gaudet shares with us another African experience: a raid into Angola with UNITA troops.

timing necessary to blow up the bridge while the enemy convoy was on it.

The raiding group practiced firing day and night maneuvers. After three days, everyone knew his job and what he was expected to do.

The officer in charge of the operation was an ex-British SAS major. His job was to organize the entire raid from start to finish. He did it with SAS precision and experience.

We packed our gear and made the final preparations for the raid, moving to the first UNITA base camp, right on the South West Africa/Angola border. The group then moved under direction of our UNITA guides to a larger base camp about 30 kilometers inside Angola.

At this larger, more secure camp, we met Col. Lubongo, UNITA commander

RIGHT: UNITA trooper, left, with CETME assault rifle and AKM. American from raiding group holds M79 grenade launcher. LEFT: Author, holding UZI SMG, displays captured Russian RPG-7 rocket launcher and AK-47. South African-made 5.56mm NATO R-4 assault rifle is on right.



of this area of operations. (For security reasons the exact position of these camps is deleted.)

Our raiding party remained at the base camp overnight. The UNITA officers assigned our group arcs of fire and defense positions in case of SWAPO or FAPLA attack. (This was unlikely because African soldiers don't like to fight at night.)

The UNITA camp personnel were very interested and curious about our presence. They asked many questions and couldn't understand why the majority of our group (95 percent) didn't speak Afrikaans. One of our party members spoke French to a UNITA merc from Zaire. There were even some merc advisers who had been with the Portuguese Army during the 1975 war, and were now fighting for UNITA.

The children of the camp crowded around our vehicles to see our gunjeeps and 14.5mm heavy-machine-gun vehicles. Approximately 80 percent of the male children (ages 10 to 15) carried weapons, the majority of which were Hungarian-type AKs with wire folding stocks (called AMD) or Spanish-made 7.62mm CETMEs. There were even some captured AK-47s and AKMs. A few officers had Russian Tokarev pistols.

The children had a great time posing for pictures as we distributed food and cigarettes to them.

The next morning we got a final brief-

ing, and went over maps and aerial photos of the target area. We had 120 kilometers to travel, primarily through SWAPO/FAPLA-controlled territory. But with our UNITA guides we could avoid most of the enemy's base camps.

Later that night at about 2200, while traveling through the bush, a fallen branch punctured the gas tank of one vehicle. As we stopped in the center of the road to repair it in the dark, noise discipline became a serious problem.

Eventually the Angolan Home Guard began to close in our position, firing shots between us to try and flush us out. It was common practice for them to fire their weapons (usually old Mausers) to alert others of danger or unusual happenings in their particular area.

We realized our precarious position and turned to our officer for a command decision. He decided we would masquerade as FAPLA soldiers by singing and turning on all lights and making as much noise as possible. Hopefully, we could bluff our way past the Home Guards. Amazingly, the ruse worked. We completed the repairs as quickly as possible and got the hell out!

At 0030 we finally reached the main asphalt road and moved southeast to find the bridge. We sent our armed Saber Land Rover down the road to engage any oncoming vehicles. We located the culvert bridge and immediately got into hasty ambush position. Our

demo man and guides went ahead to check out the bridge, and the task of rigging the demolition and positioning the vehicles for the ambush began.

The demo job took about 25 to 30 minutes. We used the improvised supports (we knew from rehearsals the approximate height of the bridge) and 440 pounds of PE (same as U.S. C-4). Our demo man, an ex-U.S. Special Forces trooper, figured it was five times more than needed, but — "What the hell, it was free and why not!"

Then came the wait. Don't let anyone tell you it's always hot in Africa, because at 0400, it can be bloody cold! The plan was to wait until 0500, blow the bridge and hurry back to friendly lines.

Unfortunately, no convoy came by. We waited until 0500 and then had to blow the empty bridge.

What a beautiful sight! Dirt and concrete scattered for at least 600 meters and the crater was large enough to drive a bus through. The demo man moved forward and placed booby traps, using captured Russian land mines.

Since the deception plan had ended, we decided to move directly to friendly lines, even if it meant going through enemy areas.

Occasionally we stopped and laid more booby traps. One of the ex-Rhodesians on my vehicle spotted some FAPLA troops trailing us and opened up on them with the 14.5mm gun. Typically, they quickly gave up and took off.

After two hours we re-entered UNITA-controlled territory. We dropped off our guides and gave Col. Lubongo a debriefing. We also dispensed pro-UNITA leaflets in the area, and then returned to South West Africa.

The UNITA people will never give up their cause to win back all Angola from the MPLA (Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola) communists. They need arms and training. They don't want economic help, simply the ways and means to return Angola to a non-communist government. They have been fighting the war for 15 years and aren't willing to quit now. Their leader, Dr. Jonas Savimbi (see "The War The World Forgot," SOF, July-August '81, and "Inside Free Angola," SOF, July '83) believes in ultimate victory, and will fight for it as long as the Free World and his own people support him. ✕

FOOTNOTE: As a result of Operation Protea in August 1981, the publicized South African drive into Southern Angola (see "To Russia with Love," SOF, January '82), UNITA now controls about 300 kilometers of this area. To the United States it may not seem to be much, but to UNITA it is a beginning of new-found freedom. We, as Americans, can help by telling Congress to support the UNITA cause.

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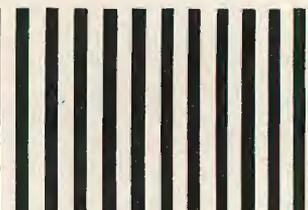
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TARGET KOLWEZI

Continued from page 55



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Around 1700 hours, Sgt. Soare's squad, the one we left at Solenzara, joined us, as well as a smart-assed TV crew. The reporters came down to the road to photograph all the "news." Their first question was exactly what I expected, "Who shot the civilians?"

"We did," I said. "Those people carried FNLC IDs."

Roussel added, "They fired at us; they weren't civilians."

But the media bastards didn't want to hear that so they shot their film and flew back to Kinshasa to report lies about the deaths. If I had known what they were going to do with my words, I would have shot the bastards then and there.

That night, Sgt. Soares' newly arrived group shot continually at things in the dark. I don't know whether they were nervous or just felt left out of the action, but they were keeping us awake. Also, they didn't stay in radio contact with Lt. Wilhem, who kept waking me up and bitching about it. I got tired of this shit so I fired a long burst with my MAT-49 in their direction and then told Lt. Wilhem to try the radio again. This time they responded immediately.

Word came down for us to move on the morning of the 21st. We left the overpass positions and moved toward Manika. We were all so damn tired we couldn't stay awake. Every time we stopped, the men lapsed into a trance-like sleep.

That afternoon Lt. Bourgain's section discovered some houses containing dead whites: 35 men, women and children mutilated and shot up. Many of the surviving Europeans reported women had been stripped, paraded and made to dance on the tables before they were raped and killed, and that many whites had been kidnapped and taken with the FNLC forces.

That night we stayed in a huge Catholic mission. For the first time since we left Calvi, I had a chance to wash and get some sleep. The next morning we made a sweep through the Riding Club. It was a beautiful place, with expensive horses. The rebels had abandoned a few tents and there was a lot of equipment scattered about. Afterward, we attended a mass given by our *aumonier* (chaplain) in honor of our dead.

Later, Lt. Wilhem, myself and my NCOs met with the captain, who started chewing asses again. "Who in the hell has been talking to the news media about the civilians shot in the car?"

"I did," I admitted, "but I don't understand what all the fuss is about. We were told the enemy was wearing civilian clothes. Anybody driving around with all that shooting going on was either an idiot or an enemy and, in my opinion, both categories needed killing."

The captain told me to shut up. He had just received word from the Minister of Defense that he was to investigate the killing of

civilians. It seemed the leftist papers in France had carried headline stories about Legion atrocities.

"If what we did was an atrocity," I said, "then so be it."

I never considered myself naive, but this was an enlightening lesson in the politics of wars against Soviet-backed "Fronts of National Liberation." The dead Europeans — raped, mutilated and dumped like garbage — were suddenly forgotten. The enemy now, according to the French papers, was the "fascist" *Legion Etrangere* and the victims were the poor defenseless blacks caught in the vise of colonial imperialism.

The next day Wilhem got his ass reamed again for the "atrocities" story. I suppose he just couldn't take it anymore: He reported to the Impala Hotel for sick call and was given bed rest for "combat fatigue." The captain blew up when he heard this, declared Wilhem unfit to command and cut orders to get him out of the regiment. Poor Wilhem. When I saw him last, he told me, in all seriousness, that Capt. Gausseres "would never make general."

On the morning of the 22nd, we moved out in civilian vehicles toward Kapata, where the large copper mine was located. The captain rode in a jeep, behind him was the legendary *debrouilleur* Sgt. Canova, in his now-doorless Mercedes with a AA-52 LMG sticking out the back window and a fresh cadaver strapped to the top. My section was loaded into a little Citroen pick-up truck. The word passed that we had a large body of FNLC troops trapped in Kapata and had to get behind them to prevent their escape.

Everyone's blood ran hot. We raced down broken trails and across dusty fields. Rebel fires had been set on our left and right, sending giant flames of burning grass dancing into the sky and smoke was everywhere. Rounding a corner, I saw Col. Eruilin standing in his jeep waving us on. We stopped by a dam, off-loaded and spread out into eight-foot-high elephant grass — we couldn't see a damn thing.

In the distance, I heard some shooting and then, on the radio, Lt. Bourgain whining about someone shooting at him. It seemed the Scout Section opened up on him thinking he was a Katangese rebel. We moved out through the grass, which was crazy, because visibility was less than one foot. Keeping control of the troops became a big problem. Up in the sky, our only civilian reconnaissance plane, piloted by a Belgian mine worker, buzzed around in circles. We still had no air support.

After an hour or so of this, I saw about 10 blacks coming across the dam carrying AK-47s and M16s. They all had their arms up, surrender-fashion. They told us that rebel trucks were stuck in the mud a few hundred meters down the road. The captain sent the adjutant to check it out and he returned shortly with about 40 rifles. By then, it was getting late and the captain feared that we would be ambushed on our way back, so we returned to the mission.

The next day, we did more sweeps around the mining area, without results.



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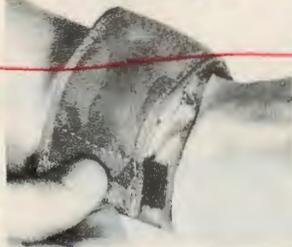


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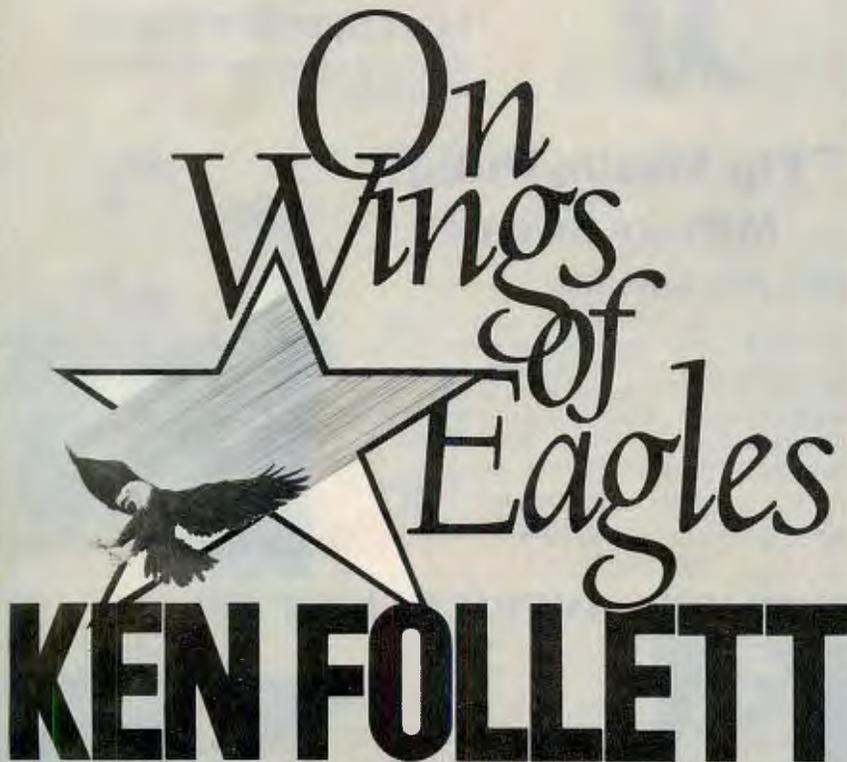
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CHESTY BELT - "FIRST TO FIGHT"



That night we moved out in a company column down a road to nowhere. We walked for hours without a break. My section performed rear guard, which meant we had to double-time to keep up. Everyone was dead tired. One of my men fell out and refused to get up. Taking his weapon, I told him, "You can stay here forever, but I'm taking your rifle." He got up and fell back in line.

We stopped around 0230. No one had any idea where we were. Most of the men fell asleep on the road. At 0300 we took up night positions and in the morning, about two hours later, we attacked an empty factory, finding nothing. Then, back we went to some uncharted road, acting as a blocking force for 1st Section, which was supposed to be pushing some FNLC troops our way. We never saw a fucking thing. After an urgent radio call, we hauled ass down some other road, also not on the map, and waited. Again nothing. Then, another call and another road — it went on all day long.

First Cie reported one legionnaire killed while crossing a railroad track. We then moved into the village of Liulu and did a house-to-house search. The hostile population, which certainly was in cahoots with the enemy, regarded us suspiciously. At the end of the village, we met 4th Cie. Since it was almost dark, we headed back toward our rendezvous point. The locals were all out in front of their houses, silently watching us march by. Something's not right, I thought.

Led by 1st Section (Lt. Bourgain), the company turned right onto a dirt road and was ambushed. Luckily, not one legionnaire was hit. The enemy quickly abandoned its positions under heavy return fire. Looking out over an open field, I had a clear view of the fire fight; suddenly, four rebels, carrying FALs, ran like hell right across our front, not 50 meters away. Everyone on my side of the road began blasting away. The rebels disappeared into a pine grove about 75 meters away, headed straight for the 1st Company, which was just on the opposite side. The rebels held up. The 1st Cie assaulted the grove, amidst a thunderclap of grenades and small-arms fire. Abruptly, the shooting stopped.

From the radio traffic, we learned one legionnaire was KIA and another wounded. Then we heard wild yells and saw one section of 1st Cie crash into the grove under a crescendo of firing. After about a minute, the firing stopped. One legionnaire was carried out in a bloody poncho, followed by four dead rebels, who were dragged out and laid in a line. The adjutant of 1st Cie wanted to take them back to the village and hang them from the lamp posts. Whether he did this or not, I don't know.

With night quickly approaching, we headed back to the mission.

During the next three days, 24-26 May, the regiment prepared for a new operation against Kapata. Europeans were reported still being held there in spite of an earlier search. On the morning of the 25th, we killed a few rebels west of Old Town. That night, 1st Cie set up ambushes around the

village of Liulu. The next day we swept through Kapata, finding two Belgian civilians. Before returning to Liulu the regiment moved on to Lubumbashi, except for my own 3rd Cie, however, which returned to Kolwezi with the 81mm Mortar Section.

During this time the different sections, as well as the different companies, competed against each other in what I call *la guerre des clous*, (the battle for the "gongs"). According to the "rules" of this silly game, my section came in first, with one tank, two Yugoslavs and a dozen or so FNLC to its credit. Some of the NCOs wouldn't even speak to me because they were jealous.

One afternoon while I was at the mission CP to pick up some ammo for my outposts, Adj. Ivanov drove up with two dead rebels draped over the fenders. He had found a grenade on one of them so he lit 'em up and went over to the CP to show the captain his section wasn't sitting on their asses. I told my men I would not tolerate a "body-count" attitude. If their only *raison d'être* was to obtain a bunch of "gongs" to wear on their chest, then they were in the wrong outfit. *La guerre des clous*, however, continued for months after Kolwezi.

During the evening of 27 May, the regiment moved out. We occupied the Impala Hotel. Firing continued all night around the hotel, all of it directed at nothing. After a while, we accepted this and, as long as the rounds didn't come our way, we didn't pay much attention. Zairian Army troops were there, but I didn't trust their loyalty or their reliability. The Zairians were like a bunch of children with big, loud toys.

The next day, 28 May, we moved our perimeter out and established road blocks. Capt. Gausseres sent Sgt. Canova to the Kolwezi airport to pick up the Moroccan officers and NCOs who were to relieve us. Later, Canova reported back that one of the Moroccans was dead.

"Dead? How did he die?" the captain screamed. "Did you get ambushed?" "No," replied Canova, "I was driving a little too fast around a curve and he fell out of the truck, killed him dead as hell."

"*Putain de Merde!*" screamed Gausseres. "Between you, Wilhelm and the news media. . . ." He just sat there holding his head in his hands. Luckily for him, Canova had enough sense not to ask the captain if he wanted to help blow the post office safe.

The first weekend in June, we loaded up and headed for Lubumbashi: Certain (predictable) countries of the world had cried for us to get out of Zaire. The ride from Kolwezi to Lubumbashi was 300 kilometers. Zairian troops were at the bridge crossing, armed to the teeth. Needless to say, the rebels were now in Angola.

The first large town we came to had a grassy park so we stopped for a rest. The whites and blacks mixed well and the whites seemed to feel secure in the town. If I hadn't known better, I would have thought we were in the United States. The children came by to talk to the legionnaires, and, not intending to lose a man on the last day, I put the legionnaires on guard.

At Lubumbashi, we were taken to an

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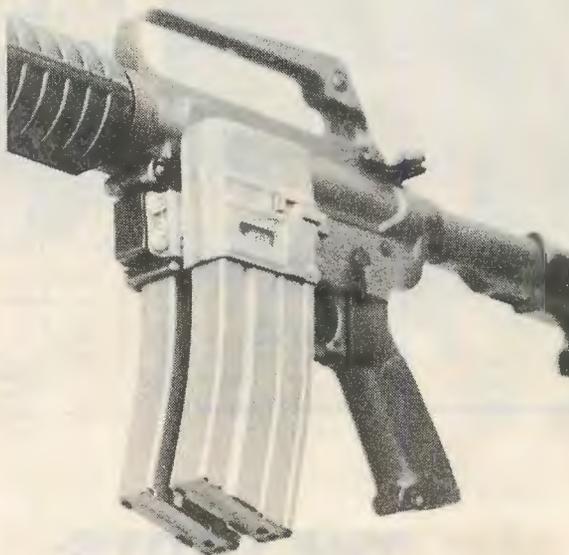
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area near the airport. Orders arrived to clean up our gear: We were taking a U.S. C-141 back to Solenzara in the morning. All U.S. hand grenades were turned in. I saw the famous writer, former officer of the 1e REP and the OAS, Capt. Pierre Sergeant. He was writing a book and came by to gather information. We saw him talking to the 3rd and 1st Sections, but he never came to our section. Capt. Gausseres was afraid he would ask "atrocities" questions. He took some pictures of Capt. Gausseres, Lt. Banal and the company flag, which he put on the back cover of his book.

The next morning, we got into the trucks for a short ride to the Lubumbashi airport. We loaded only the jeeps aboard the big U.S. 141s. Other C-141s were circling overhead. They landed and debarked their cargos of Moroccan soldiers. The French officers were just flabbergasted at the American aircraft and the excellent equipment. The U.S. Air Force lieutenant colonel gave it the gas to get it airborne and everyone was thrown to the rear by the power of takeoff. We stopped briefly in Kinshasa to refuel and change any Zairian money we had, and then headed for home.

A month later, I saw the results of our 17-day Kolwezi mission, which in the long run speak for themselves. We saved more than 3,000 Europeans from certain death and evacuated 2,000 to Europe. More than 252 FNLC troops were killed; 163 captured; two Panhard AML armored cars, four recoilless rifles, 15 mortars, 21 rocket launchers, 10 machine guns, 38 SMGs and 216 rifles were destroyed. Five legionnaires were killed in action and 25 wounded, all from enemy small-arms fire.

The six French military advisers staying in the Impala Hotel when the invasion began were listed as MIA and to this date have never been found. The favorable press and TV gave us credit for successfully executing a "high-risk operation." The leftist press and the communists called us "trigger-happy mercenaries, throw-backs to colonialism and fascists." We didn't know it at the time, but the left won. ☒

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SAHARA WAR

Continued from page 80

The Moroccan goals seem clear and comprehensible, and by logical extension, U.S. interest in a stable Morocco is clear. What is less obvious is the motivation of Soviet sponsorship of the other side. Intentions, of course, are always difficult to assess and, for this reason, the bulk of intelligence-gathering is instead usually focused on ascertainment of capabilities. The entire desert war is only comprehensible if it is somehow related to an expansion of current Soviet capability.

BEAR tracks leading to the Atlantic: The past six years have seen an ever-escalating Soviet support for the Polisario forces. The political importance attached to this effort by the Soviets apparently includes a willingness to sacrifice the Organization of African Unity over the Sahara question, although the left-wing majority in that group has served Soviet purposes well over the years. The crucial questions, in light of all this, refer to Soviet intentions with respect to the tactics and strategy of the Saharan war.

Whatever their goals, there are troubling indications that the OAU disintegration and closing of avenues

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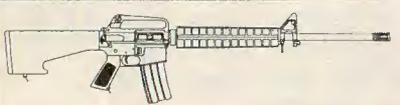
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for political struggle could signal a Soviet decision in favor of military solutions for African conflicts in general, and the Sahara in particular. With 100,000 Cuban troops already on the ground in Africa, the military option must seem attractive. No one expects the massive Soviet logistic, economic and political support to be withdrawn or scaled down.

The most worrisome point is the ends sought to be achieved by this long, disciplined effort. Obviously, keeping Polisario in business serves Algerian interests directly by causing a continued drain on Moroccan resources and offering the eventual prospect of great political and economic gains for Algeria.

Only the naïve, however, would suggest the Soviet investment in this enterprise is justified in the Kremlin only on the basis of sodality with their Algerian comrades. Somewhere in the western desert is a prize worthy of the endeavor, and I had to draw upon 20 years of bear-tracking experience to figure out what the Russians wanted here.

One rational basis for Soviet action is their regional interest in maintaining a "belt of insecurity" across northern Africa from the Red Sea to the Atlantic, through Ethiopia and the Sudan to Chad, Mali, Niger, Mauritania and the western Sahara.

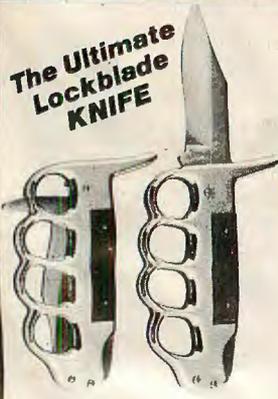
In the struggle against Soviet expansionism, the three most reliable allies of the United States in Africa are Egypt, Morocco and the Union of South Africa, forming a triangle of support for the West. With secure bases in Algeria and Libya, operations in the "belt of insecurity" designed to destabilize the northern components of the triangle can be maintained. Because a Polisario success in the Sahara would also endanger Hassan's rule within Morocco, Soviet interests are thereby served.

(The Soviet/Cuban/East German teams also support African National Congress operations against South Africa. Evidence of their involvement was furnished to U.S. Congressional committees in March '82 by the testimony of several former ANC members, including Bartholemew Hlapane. Nine months later, on the morning of 17 December 1982, Hlapane's daughter opened the door of their house to find a green-clad man with a Kalashnikov on the stoop. Hlapane and his wife were executed; the daughter was seriously wounded, but has since recovered.)

My analysis of Soviet policies and practices, however, suggested there must be a more tangible and important objective that justified the long-term, intensive support of Polisario's drive across the Sahara to the Atlantic.

The nature of that objective, I believe, could best be determined from a consideration of the geopolitical

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imperatives determining Soviet capabilities for projection of power in wartime environment, particularly with respect to the ever-more-powerful Soviet naval forces, the core of Kremlin overseas strategy since 1967.

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From this perspective, acquisition of the vast U.S.-built facilities at Cam Rahn Bay in Vietnam has provided a major forward base for Soviet surface and long-range naval aviation units operating in the Indian Ocean and the western Pacific, and thus greatly enhanced Soviet war-fighting capabilities. Similar considerations have clearly underlain a great deal of the Soviet effort and expense in Cuba and Grenada.

Possibly the single most important long-term Soviet objective remains acquisition of naval facilities in the Atlantic, the most likely conflict arena, to complement their expanded capabilities elsewhere.

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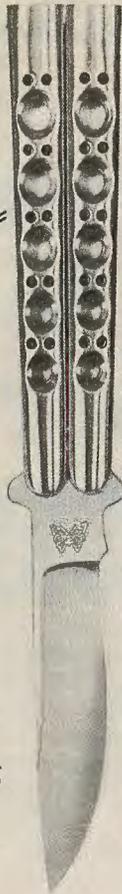
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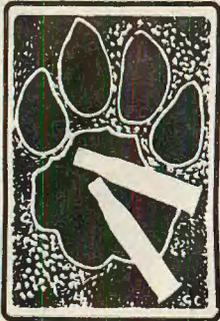
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"Aside from the obvious enhancement of Soviet surface naval power, if their long-range naval aviation could be transferred rapidly to bases near the coasts of Africa, key areas of the Central and South Atlantic... could be covered by those aircraft as well as submarines and made very dangerous for U.S. and Western shipping and sea power."

Altogether, there is good reason to believe the true Soviet goal is indeed the most valuable asset which could be added to their inventory: the vast harbor at Dakhla. This would also account for the long-term and highly secret build-up of Soviet operations in the Spanish-ruled Canary Islands, off the southern coast of Morocco.

In years past, the Soviets, with the assistance of the Algerian Secret Service, nourished a "Movement for the Independence of the Canary Islands." Eventually, these activities attracted too much attention from the Spanish intelligence authorities, and in 1978 the secretary-general of the



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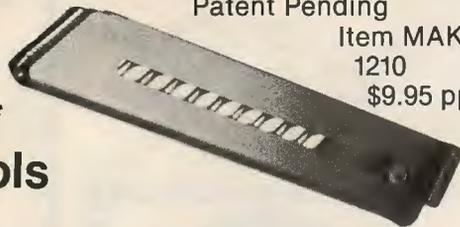
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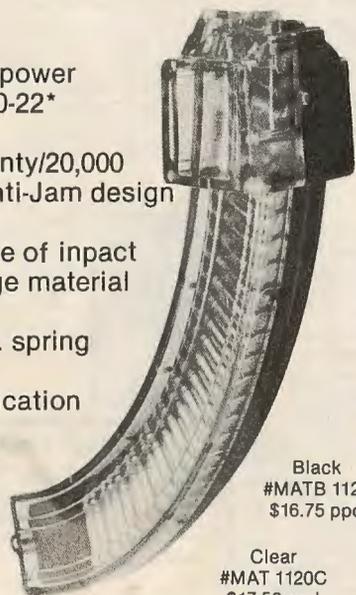
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RANCH WARS

Continued from page 96

The guerrillas then focused their efforts in the southwestern and central highlands, where they have been more successful. Various church groups such as the Maryknoll priests began infiltrating the area to set up clinics and schools. With their "agrarian-reform" politics, these organizations provided the guerrillas a good liaison with the populace. The social help they offered became a focal point for guerrilla sympathy.

The war in Guatemala has been nickel-and-dime for over 20 years now, and the economy is slowly sliding into ruin. The Spanish *patron* system is prevalent here: Peasant families have worked for the same landowners for generations. It's a paternalistic system: Peasants depend on their richer employers to make life good for them. Generally, the quality of life in Guatemala is better than most Third World countries. But those self-sufficient landed gentry are the targets of guerrillas, and they are slowly but surely being destroyed.

"I want to work," lamented our friend Enrique. "I don't want to have to worry about being kidnapped or having my property destroyed. If landowners like me can progress, and can do it without impediment from the guerrillas, then the people who work for us can work and progress too. There is a trickle-down effect. To achieve their ends, the guerrillas destroy the wealthy. But I'm afraid that the general peasant population hasn't the knowledge or experience to improve the land. If the communists win, the agricultural system — and therefore the economic stature of the nation — will fall to ruin."

We flew to Enrique's coffee mill, scanning the jungle for signs of guerrillas. One month ago, this mill was ready to process the season's pick. Now it was a charred rubble, destroyed by a band of about 100 guerrillas led by what workers described as six or eight men with machine guns dressed in army camouflage. The mill was built at the turn of the century, its German- and English-made machinery hauled through the jungle on mules. The 60-year-old foreman, who had worked the mill for 25 years, had been dragged up a trail a few yards and executed. The workers erected a small cross at the site of his murder.

"We were about to pick the coffee," said Enrique regretfully, "but now we're busy trying to get the mill running again." It looked like they had a lot of work to do.

"The guerrillas who did this are hiding up there," Enrique pointed at a volcano to the west. "We usually have our annual farm festival in July. But not this year..."

We travelled on to Enrique's larger coffee farm, close to the Mexican border, the front line. The small security detachment had returned fire from guerrillas the day before. Enrique sent out a patrol, which aggressively pumped fire onto guerrilla positions. The following day, the farm next

door was hit hard. Even with his small security force, Enrique showed the guerrillas that he means business.

"The guerrillas are basically cowards, anyway," he scoffed.

We were headed back to home base when, suddenly, we were thrown into our own "no-shit-there-we-were-thought-we-were-gonna-die" situation. After flying up to watch one of Guatemala's more active volcanoes explode, Enrique turned around and flashed us a nervous smile. "Uh. The landing gear doesn't work. . . ." Oh, shit! After tearing apart the emergency hand jack and putting it back together, we were able to manually crank the gear up and down. No sweat.

Although Guatemala's war is simmering right now, it could, in some respects be compared to the early years of Vietnam when rebel forces were disorganized and government response was unsophisticated. But with the Guatemalan Army getting more and better training, and guerrillas establishing a more efficient order of battle, the conflict may escalate accordingly.

The "state of emergency" going on during our visit was generally an internal problem resulting from an unsuccessful coup attempt, not instigated by communist guerrillas. Out in the countryside, we couldn't tell that anything out of the ordinary was going on, except that our shooting sessions with security guards were held to a minimum so as not to draw attention from nearby army patrols.

Entering the airport in Guatemala City was the only time we noticed any state-of-emergency procedures. We waited in a mob upon entering the terminal to have our luggage screened, and there were soldiers and cops everywhere — quite a different scene from when I left Guatemala last February. Then, SOF Art Director Craig Nunn and I had ambled into the almost vacant terminal and watched *Mad Max* on the wall television with several disinterested Indians.

Guthrie and I left Guatemala in mid-July. We were impressed with the ranch-security systems we saw, and made acutely aware of the dangers of *not* having organized protection programs. The guerrillas are out there, and they are bent on destruction. It's a simple fact of life in Guatemala. We also came home with the firm belief that most of the people of Guatemala are on the side of their government, and are not willing to allow foreign-sponsored insurgents to take over their country.

With the war raging in El Salvador (a four-hour drive from Guat City), Guatemala is on the brink.

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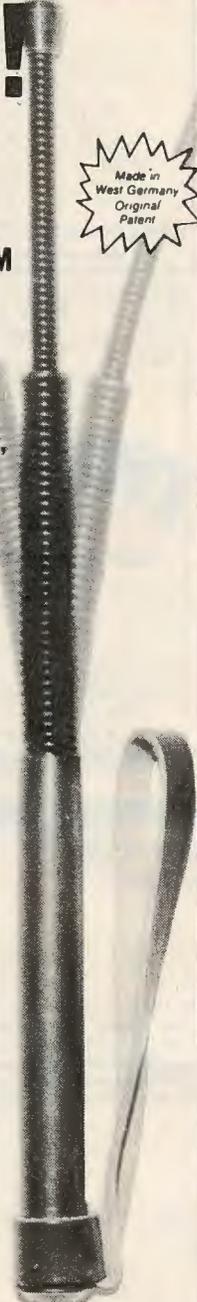
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SUB-MARINE

Continued from page 101

leader was satisfied that all was in order, he contacted the back-up team inside the boat via the 31MC (intercom), and informed them that all was fine and the divers were ready to go.

There are seven steps in preparing for a lock out, all equally important. After checking with the back-up team, the team leader undogs the side door. It cannot open yet because outside pressure keeps it firmly in place. At this time, there are four sets of lungs gobbling up what little air there is to be had in this undersized compartment, so the leader informs those inside that he is about to "open the vent," a valve that allows air into the trunk. This completed, he reaches up and turns another valve, informing those inside that he is about to flood the trunk. A small opening at foot-level opens, and the outside starts coming in. This is when sailors start making amends with the sea gods.

Here we were: standing in this confined space while the water seeped in from the feet up. When it got to just below the top of the side door, and about armpit high, depending on how tall you are, the outside door was supposed to open just a crack, as the outside and inside pressures equalize, at which time the flood was secured. If it did not open, a little squirt of air from the blow valve would usually do the trick.

The team members, designated Nos. 1, 2, 3, 4, then departed the trunk, crawled their way up the five- or six-step ladder to the deck plates, and sat tight till the last man was out. The safety diver would then place one hand in the small of the swimmer's back and one on his stomach and squeeze till he was sure all the air was out the man's lungs. Then, after being certain that the swimmers' lungs were void of air, he gave them the thumbs-up signal and off went Nos. 1 and 2 to the surface while the procedure was repeated on Nos. 3 and 4.

Although all the air had been squeezed out of the swimmer's lungs, he still had to exhale during his ascent. The compressed

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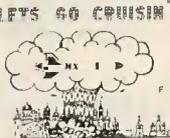
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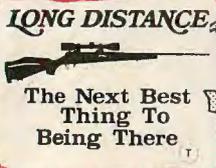
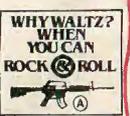
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air taken into his bloodstream while in the trunk would continue to fill and expand his lungs, and failure to "blow and go" would not only rupture the lungs, but result in an air embolism, a most serious hazard for a diver. Air is forced from the lungs into the circulatory system, which in turn forms bubbles that block the blood vessels supplying blood to the brain. Result: brain damage and death. (In a combat operation there is no help from the safety divers; they are merely there to assist a team member should he become disoriented.)

Once the last man reached the surface, a few breaths of fresh air would be inhaled, and the team would begin their descent back into the trunk, in the same order as they departed, with the team leader being the last to go down. The only thing a man had to remember on the way down was to push in on his face mask, and give a mighty snort through his nose at every six-foot level (one knew when it was due); this was to prevent face mask squeeze, and popping of ear drums and sinuses. There was no problem identifying the guys who failed to do so. When they got into the trunk, all you could see in their face masks was the bright-red blood that squished out of eyes and noses, usually filling the mask and causing a good deal of pain.

These comings and goings went on hour after hour, each team taking their turn night and day till it was certain that they could perform this task by rote. The underway jobbies were just about the same except that the boat was running at a speed of two

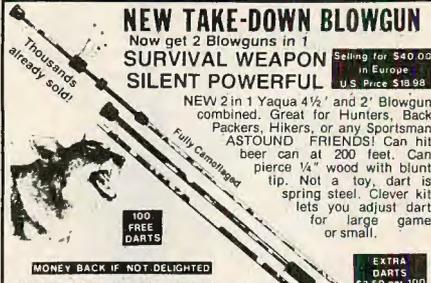
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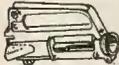
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Armors Kit - Total Assam. & Disassembly 69.95
Includes - Barrel Vise Jaws, 177 Gas Tube Pins, Drill Punch, Ordnance Tool, Assorted Springs, Pins and Screws, GI Technical Service Manual & Cleaning Kit, Site Tool
Chamber Reamers: 223 (rough or finish) 58.00
Headspace Gauges: (with instructions) 20.00
"No GO" - Dangerous condition (Excessive Headspace) 20.00
"Go" - Inadequate Headspace 20.00
"Field" - Shape of Chamber 20.00



Armors Barrel Wrench 9.95

MISC.



Hand Grenade-MKII Fragmentation w/Pin & Spoon Inert 4.95
M1 Magazine 15 round 2.95
LSA Gun Oil 8 oz. Tube 1.50
M 203 Grenade Launcher Barrels 40 mm New!!! M16 59.95

UZI Magazine

25 round 9.95
Blank Firing Adapter - Gov't Issue new 7.95
M80 Sling - extra wide will fit M16 6.95
UZI Mag Loader 19.95
UZI Site Tool 22.95
UZI Mag Cap Holder 3.95
M16-A-1 Nylon Cleaning Kit Case - 4.95
Valcro 4.95
Side Sling Adapter AR/M16 6.95
FN Armors Kit 138.95
Mini 14 Bayo Lugs Blue 7.95
Stainless 10.95
45 Mags "New Colt" \$12.95
FN Hensold Scope 4x 417.00
FN Scope Mount 247.00

FN-FAL

FN-FAL 7.62 NATO MAGAZINES-NEW Genuine FAL-no converts Special 15.95
Used excellent condition. 6.95
FN Drill Instructors Manual-Restricted info on agility and Combat exercises, many aspects not covered in owner's manual, an excellent addition 9.95
Extractor Assembly (22, 28A, 29B) (LAR) 33.80
Breech Block (21) (LAR) 149.95
Gas Block (1B) (LAR) 119.95
BIPODS!! We are accepting orders, 30 day delivery limited quantities 199.95
Bayonet w/scabbard 49.95

BIPODS!!!

UZI Barrel Shrouds
UZI Ventilated Barrel Shrouds
- Instant Installation, Replaces Barrel Nut
- All Machined Steel, No Stampings or Spot Welds
- No Cast Parts
- Lifetime Warranty
- Protects Hands from Burns on Rapid Fire
10" 49.95
12" 59.95
16" w/Flash Suppressor 69.95
16" w/AR15 Muzzle Brake 64.95
16" w/AR15 Muzzle Brake 69.95
16" w/MAC 10 Suppressor Coupling 67.95
16" w/MAC 10 Suppressor Coupling 69.95

UZI Open Bolt (SMG) 89.95
UZI Extractor (wide Lip SMG) 14.95
UZI Auto Recoil Spring 16.95

ARM/M16 Front & Rear Site Tool

9.95

Lower Receiver Assembly

Lower Receiver XM15 (FFL required) Gray (no Offset Pin required) (Colt Forging) 77.95
Lower Receiver complete and assembled with AR15 or M16 parts (specify) (FFL) 113.95
COLT 15.7 Lower Receiver Parts Kit w/Grip (Lower Receiver & Auto Sear not included) Specially for AR15 or M16. 56.95

Buffer Detent 1.30
Buffer Detent Spring 5.00
Bolt Catch 4.00
Bolt Catch Spring 5.00
Bolt Catch Plunger 5.00
Bolt Catch Pin 5.00
Bolt Catch Assembly 4.95
Disconnecter 2.45
Disconnecter Spring 2.50
M16 Hammer, Trigger, Safety Selector & Disconnecter (1 of each part) (Colt) 17.95
Tighten the action with our Spring Packages Hammer, Trigger, Ejector, Disconnecter, Extractor & Magazine Catch Springs (1 of each Spring) 2.95
Hammer (specify AR15 or M16) (Colt) w/ J Pin 5.95
Hammer Trigger Pin (J Pin) 5.00
Hammer, Trigger or Sear Pin (each) 95
Hammer Spring 95
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knots, just enough to keep it from going to the bottom. The only change was that there was a line running from the top of the conning tower to just above the hatch of the trunk that we used to pull ourselves down.

As previously stated, this work is not suited for a person prone to claustrophobia. One of our sergeants was a claustrophobic, but failed to note it on the medical application when he entered the Corps. How he ever got through the New London phase was something else. It had to be sheer will, and a strong need to stay with the company. However, it caught up with him in the trunk. I'm here to tell you, when you're in an enclosed space like we were at the time, with just enough room to wriggle your toes, and someone decides he wants out, it's a very bad scene indeed.

While the trunk began to flood he popped and tried to claw his way through three inches of steel. Unless you're Spiderman or some other superhero, you just can't do that. Trying to pin him until the back-up team emptied out the trunk was akin to having a saber-toothed tiger by the tail. Not only was he banged up and bruised from head to toe, but the rest of the team was as well. Once inside, the sub's doctor quieted him down with a shot of something or other, the boat surfaced, and the sergeant was transferred to a surface craft. Operations resumed.

Having completed our on-board training — but with one more week of patrolling, which included a night lock out/lock in — we had a few days' respite. After scrubbing

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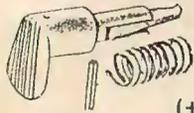
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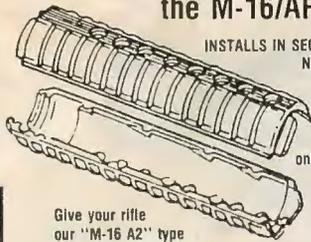
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and cleaning our gear and ourselves, we started drifting into the ville for a bit of R&R. We had our favorite bar that we frequented whenever we were free, and were looking forward to a weekend of fun and frolic. What we didn't know was that on this particular weekend a ship had pulled into the harbor for a one-day visit. Part of her crew decided that our favorite bar was their favorite bar also, even though most of them had never before been to St. "T."

Now there are times Marines and sailors can be as amiable toward each other as one could want. Not many times, mind you, but it is said to have happened a time or two since the Corps was founded back in 1775. And then again, there are other times when, while mingling, they are not very nice to each other, and each group tries its hateful best to make life as miserable and uncomfortable for the other as is humanly possible.

On this occasion, the Navy stooped to a new low. How, you might ask, did the Navy do such a thing? Well, I'll tell you: by allowing what must have been their ship's "mascot" to come ashore... said mascot being one lieutenant junior grade, the size and shape of King Kong. No slur intended toward the real King Kong — he was a hell of a lot better looking than this guy, even after his fall from the Empire State Building. At first we didn't pay any particular attention to him, being as how the Navy's officer corps is staffed by some of the strangest creatures known to man.

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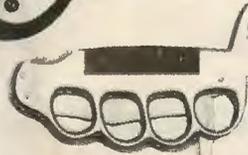
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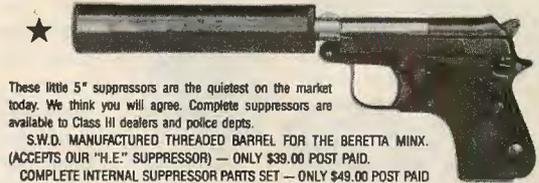
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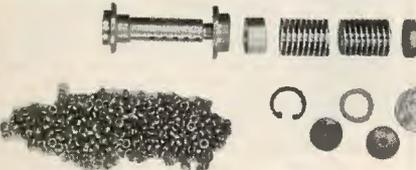
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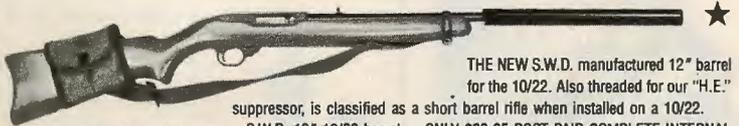
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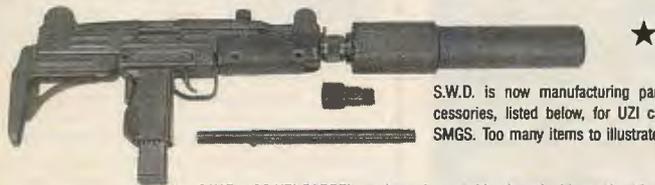
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NCO, all five-feet-eight and 140 pounds of him, decided that he was going to take Kong's bananas away from him. The rest of us knew absolutely nothing of his plans until he executed them: boo hoo, gasp and mercy. Over walked our hero to where the Ape was sitting at the bar, and laid an empty beer bottle over his head.

At this point, I have to give a little credit where credit is due. Glass lifted halfway between the bar and his jibs, Kong didn't even break stride. All he did was lift his hand to his head, say, "goddam, that hurt," turn round, lift our man up and — using him as one would a Q-tip — cleaned out his right ear, then flipped him across the room. This, of course, was the signal for the opening of the dance. Now, folks, whenever (inten-

tionally or unintentionally) you find yourself in the middle of one of these things, the best place you could be is the other side of town. Unfortunately, I was not on the other side of town, so I tried for the second best place: under the nearest table. And again — unfortunately — I never made it there, either. The third best thing is to get in there and hook and jab with the rest of them. Sometimes you have a good time; sometimes you don't.

Kong, on the other hand, was just having himself a dandy old time out in the middle of the floor, winding clocks and getting his own wound like the uncouth buffoon that he was. Although these things are over about as quickly as they start, there is usually a bit of damage done to the premises, and of course the fiddler must be paid. The following morning we were marched down into town, escorted by our CO and some law-enforcement guys, and restitution was made. The ship, having left earlier, left us footing the bill. Having paid what was considered a fair share (the guy could have built three new bars), my liberty came to a halt, since my money supply was depleted. I really didn't care though, 'cause it's awfully hard trying to drink from a glass or bottle when your upper lip is draped over your ear, and the bottom one is hanging down to your belly button.

At the beginning of the fifth week, some of us boarded the *Sea Lion* for the last time. Our final patrol consisted of a night lock-out and four-day recon of our assigned area. This was also to be the third run-in with a

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As the team went up, the divers returned to the trunk for a short wait until the next team was brought to their destination.

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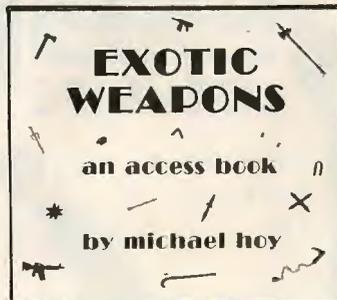
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About 10 minutes from our lock-out, three of us spotted the glow of a dorsal fin as it passed by on our left side about four feet away. It swam past, then made a slow circle and disappeared. It had disappeared, but we didn't know where. And where could we have gone if he decided on a midnight snack? We were an extremely nervous team till we got to the beach.

Reaching the beach at about 0300 hours, two members of the team, the assistant team leader and scout, went in to check out the area while the other two remained in the water, neck-deep, ready to split if the first half of the team were caught. (The job had to be done, even if all but one man were caught.) Satisfied that the beach was clear, the leader signalled — a few blinks of a red light — and the rest of us went ashore, switched into patrol gear and continued our mission. On this job we photographed, counted personnel, marked approaches and exits, and noted a number of other pertinent facts about a radio station about a mile and a half from our landing point.

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As with the lock-out prior to our mission, the lock-ins had to be accomplished after darkness. The team leader estimated a thousand meters (so many kicks of a fin equals so many meters; each man has a different count). When they reach what the leader determines is the pick-up point, a 100-foot nylon line is removed from the equipment bag and stretched out in as straight a line as surf and wind allow. The assistant team leader is on one end, the scout on the other, and the team leader and radio operator are centered. The line is held down-current from the approach of the boat. The radioman holds the line as far under water as he can, in order to snatch a buoy that will be attached to the bow of the sub.

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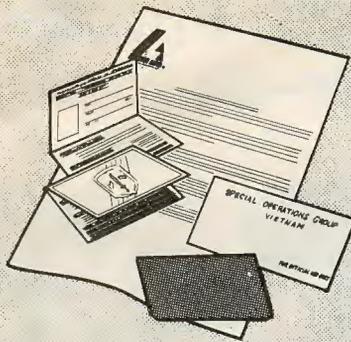
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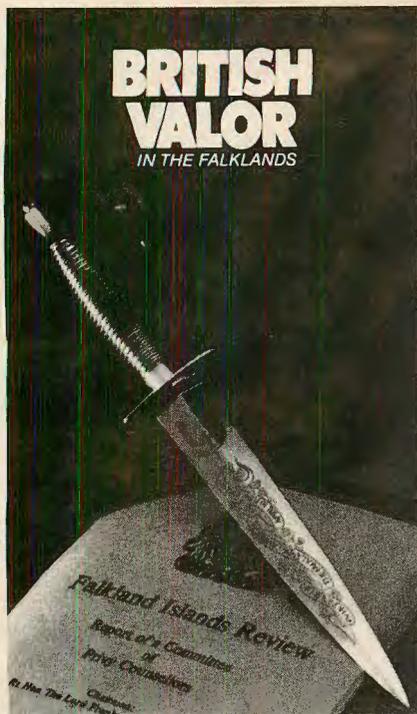
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beach, hoping to come reasonably close to the point set up on shore.

Jumping with tanks (twin 90s, a bit larger than civilian tanks) is no different from an ordinary jump. The diver dons SCUBA gear and then straps the 'chute over the tanks with special straps. The exit, however, is a bit different. Jumping from the ramp of a C-130 is a dream, but from one of those old-time, twin-engine, noise-making PBYS with a tiny hatch on the side is, at best, two clicks below a Chinese fire drill.

Coming over the drop zone, the team is hooked up and ready. The man behind the one in front checks his equipment and turns on his air. Everyone takes a few breaths to make sure his tanks are working, the first man checking the last, then they're ready to go.

My first experience coming out of one of those things will linger in my mind for many moons. Here we are, four of us, standing just inside this little hatch, our fins slid up on our arms, face masks around our throats and humps on our backs that would have made the bellringer of Notre Dame proud.

When the jumpmaster said, "Go," all four of us wanted out at the same time. Good god a'mighty. It was push, bump, shove and swear for a few seconds. Once out, and looking up to check on the cloth, I fully expected to see nothing, the way I came out of that thing. It was there, though, and on the way down, I even had time to put on the fins and face mask. Once I ascertained that the main was open, I loosened

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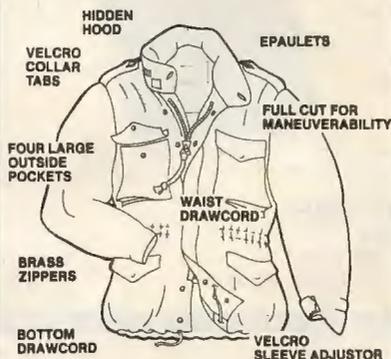
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the reserve and unhooked from one side, and about 10 feet from the water, dropped the back pack. Ideally, the main is blown over and the jumper doesn't have to worry about untying himself from the shroud lines. Once in the water, the partners hook up and take off.

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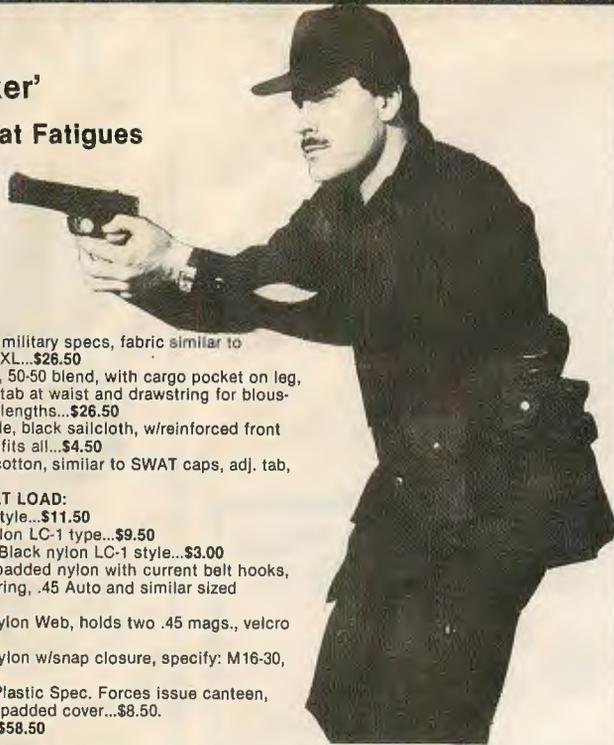
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IN REVIEW

Continued from page 14

tell the troops who use it its correct designation.

Along with these mystery weapons, Suvorov describes mystery units that had hitherto escaped the notice of Western analysts. These range from small sub-units, such as the regimental multiple-rocket-launcher batteries that Suvorov claims exist, to units giving significant new operational capabilities, such as the four naval *Spetznatz Brigada* (Special Operations Brigades) he claims exist, their personnel not showing up on orders of battles because they are kept hidden in other units. On mobilization, however, these *Spetznatz Brigada* allegedly provide a far-reaching special operations capability, which includes "athletic teams" that also specialize in what the CIA used to call ITE — Insertion, Termination, Extraction.

Probably the strongest recommendation one can give about **Inside the Soviet Army** is that it illuminates, from within, the Soviet way of war. Those whose military experience is limited to the U.S. military or its NATO allies will see depicted a reflection of an army that is both familiar and strange — familiar in the sense of being an army, but different in that the mindset that permeates the Soviet Army is so different from anything we have in the West.

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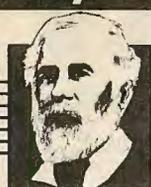
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The Soviet Army will do whatever it has to do to win. The Soviets believe that, at one level of analysis, war is a science. They are trying to find the solution to a constantly changing equation, although implementing this solution is another thing — which is why war is also an art. The army Suvorov served in is — despite its informers, brutality, stupidity and the impression that everything seemed to be fouled up beyond repair — an extremely powerful fighting machine whose aim is victory in modern warfare. It should be able to accomplish this mission, should it ever be called upon to do so.

It is unfortunate that Suvorov did not illustrate this book with pencil sketches of some of the weapons he talks about because other articles he has written and illustrated show that he actually can draw.

Inside the Soviet Army has its limitations. It should be treated with caution, but even where it contradicts conventional wisdom, Suvorov performs an excellent job of reminding us just how often conventional wisdom, even when uttered from the mouths of the most august experts, is wrong. It cannot serve as a single-source reference to the Soviet Army, but it can make other sources much more valuable to the reader by allowing him to share the perceptions of the men who must use the weapons and tactics in combat. This is why Viktor Suvorov has done his new allies in the West a great service by writing this book. ☒

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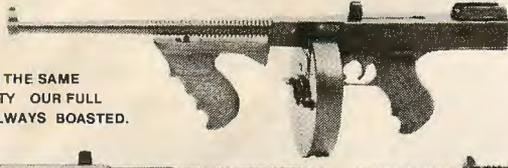
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FLAK



Continued from page 9

HAYDEN BABBLES...

Sirs:

I enclose an article from the Bakersfield Californian concerning the Jane Fonda/Tom Hayden issue. I find it hard to believe that people such as they can get away with the terrible things they did.

"On 30 March 1973, Tom Hayden took his parting shot at our returning prisoners of war by stating, 'I think on the whole that these guys are liars and hypocrites... They are liars if they suggest that they were abused by the North Vietnamese... They are hypocrites because they are trying to pose as heroes when they killed more people than they would care to remember.'"

Christopher Lee
Bakersfield, California

Hayden/Fonda, who are rumored to desire a national political future, have made a number of outrageous statements in the past which will need to be remembered at the appropriate time. It should not surprise anyone to find Hayden, with his leftist tunnel vision, would deny what everyone knows — the North Vietnamese systematically tortured American prisoners. The American left does not like to talk much about Southeast Asia these days as the exodus of the boat people, liquidation of South Vietnamese in re-education camps, yellow-rain attacks in both Laos and Cambodia on minority tribes and the reign of terror under Pol Pot in Cambodia (the number of people estimated to have been executed there, about two million, exceeds the death toll for both sides in the Vietnam War) has done significant damage to the image the left tried to paint of post-U.S. Southeast Asia. A few of the anti-war types — Joan Baez, for example

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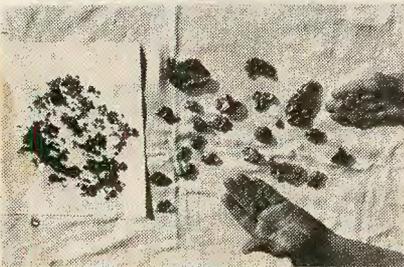
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— have since admitted the communists are capable of some very nasty things but not Hayden/Fonda. SOF doubts they ever will. —Jim Graves

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Sirs:

I think it's a disgrace and an insult that NASA invited Jane Fonda to the VIP section at Kennedy Space Center for the launching of the space shuttle *Challenger*. All SOF readers should send a letter of protest to Lt. Gen. James A. Abrahamson, head of the NASA space shuttle program.

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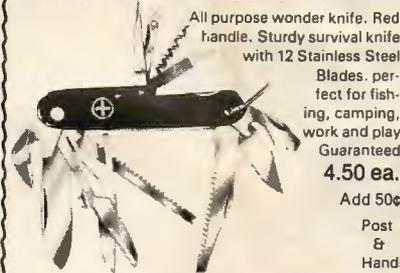
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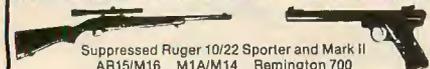
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USMC KA-BAR currently manufactured by KA-BAR according to the WWII specifications. 7 inch blade, USMC stamped on blade and sheath. Retail \$37.00. Our price \$25.00 postpaid. Write for catalog of hunting, survival and military knives. **THE WILDERNESS EDGE**, RFD#4, Box 121, Canton, NY 13617.

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WANTED ONE USED MARINE CORP UNIFORM. Pant size W30-L32, Jacket size Med 40-42, Hat size 7 1/8. You can call (707) 974-3444 or write **TERRY J. MYRAN**, Taylor, ND 58656.

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GEARING UP

Black Dress Uniforms -



Black Commando Dog Tag Set - (A Kaufman's Exclusive): 2 GI stainless steel tags, specially treated to be non glare flat black plus 2 black (4" and 24") ball chains \$5.00/set

Regulation GI Dog Tags - set of 2 stainless steel tags and 2 stainless chains (4" and 24") \$3.00/each
Want us to print them? WE'LL PRINT ANYTHING up to 6 lines and 15 spaces per line.
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PLEASE, NO DOG TAG IMPRINTING ORDERS BY TELEPHONE.

Dog Tag Silencers - black, non-glare rubber bumpers for tags \$1.00/pair

Special Forces Green Beret - Jaunty and caring and classy - like the professional's who wear them. These are official regulation berets of 100% vat dyed wool and meeting all military specs. Made expressly for us by the prime government contractor. Also available: Official headgear for:
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Ranger Commandos (Black)
Artillery & Guardian Angels (Red)
Commando Dress (Camouflage)
Sizes - 6 7/8 to 7 3/4

Drill Instructor/Smokey the Bear Hat - Formerly called the Campaign Hat, this is a really fine quality pressed felt hat. A hat with character. No one who wears it escapes a personality change. An uncontrollable urge to shout orders or heap abuses, pursue flammers or write traffic tickets. Let your true or wistful self be heard. Sizes: 6 7/8 to 7 5/8 \$19.75/each

Genuine Leather Chin Strap \$2.00/each
Acorn Hat Cord (as shown) \$6.00/each
(Specify color: silver, gold metallic, black/gold, metallic, yellow, red or light blue)

Ranger Combat Cap-Woodland Camouflage - latest Army issue. This winterweight cap features lined flaps which can fold out to keep your ears warm and tucked into the hat when the weather's balmy. Sizes run small! Also available in Olive Drab (OD) Green. Sizes 7 1/4, 7 1/2, 7 3/4 \$9.00/each

All Orders Shipped Within 24 Hours

Watch Cap, 100% Wool - This is the genuine GI, tightly knit, and all-wool watch cap. Used by commandos and troops alike, this tightly knit cap fits snug on any size head for maximum warmth on extended cold weather operations. Sides can roll down to protect ears. Choose between dark blue/black (Navy Seal or Marine Recon teams) or OD (olive drab; army) \$6.00/each

Commando Sweater - Patterned after the famous British Commando Sweater, this is manufactured in the USA for US military use. The USMC sweater is crewneck, olive drab (OD) green in color. The Army sweater is V-neck, in dark navy blue and has epaulettes and a breast patch for nameplate. The natural 100% wool fiber content makes the sweater super warm; the long cut and tight knit ribbed design makes it windproof. Sleeve and shoulder patches provide protection at abrasion points. Specify size: S, M, L, XL. Choose: Olive Drab (OD) Green (USMC) or Navy Blue (Army) \$39.75 each

Commando Sweater - Commercially made - patterned after the GI ones, these are commercially made in easy care 100% acrylic. Although they are copies, they are constructed surprisingly true to the all wool ones. complete with sleeve and shoulder patches. Choose between: Olive Drab (OD) Green or Black. Specify Size: S, M, L, XL \$21.75/each.

Battle Dress Uniforms - (Illustration of a camouflage battle dress uniform) \$34.00/each; \$57.50/set
Woodland Pattern Camouflage - 50% cotton/50% nylon. Army's latest issue; the pants have a reinforced seat and knees; the jacket has reinforced elbows. Brand New. Specify: Jacket or Pants \$34.00/each; \$57.50/set
Day Desert Pattern Camouflage - 50% cotton/50% nylon. Latest issue to Airborne Troops of the Rapid Deployment Force. Brand New. Reinforced as Woodland Pattern above. Specify: Jacket or Pants \$34.00/each; \$57.50/set
Olive Drab (OD) Green - 100% cotton. ripstop, as used in early Vietnam. Current GI manufacture. Brand New. Specify: Jacket or Pants \$30.00/each; \$57.50/set
Tiger Stripe Pattern Camouflage - Commercial Manufacture - these are made by a US Government contractor to military specs. The tiger stripe pattern is true. They are reinforced as the Woodland Pattern Camouflage, above. Regular lengths only (no longs). Specify Jacket or Pants \$36.75/each; \$69.50/set

Long Sleeve Camouflage T-Shirts - green leaf pattern; 50% cotton, 50% polyester \$9.75 each; 2 for \$18.00
Hooded Long Sleeve Camouflage T-Shirt with Kangaroo Pockets - Green leaf pattern, 50% cotton 50% polyester \$14.50/each; 2 for \$27.00

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Ray-Ban Sunglasses 25% Off - These are the Real McCoy's by Bausch & Lomb. Also USAF and NASA Pilot glasses. Call for free sunglasses brochure

Camouflage Collection Catalog - 24 pages of genuine military clothing, gear and equipment with an emphasis on camouflage \$1.00/each. Free with any order.

US Navy Cold Weather Deck Jackets - Type A2 - These jackets feature windproof cuff and hip closures plus a full zipper front with button over closure. The Olive Drab (OD) green shell is 50% cotton/50% nylon. This blend allows the jacket to be water repellent (not waterproof) while at the same time it has the softness of the natural fibre. It is lined with double face pile in both the body and sleeves. It sports two hip pockets and a breast pocket with snap closure. The Deck Jacket is cut slightly below the waist so large or tall persons will find it quite comfortable. XS, S, M, L \$47.75/each; XL \$50.75/each; XXL \$55.75/each.

Satisfaction Guaranteed

Angle Head Flashlight - This is the heavy duty olive drab plastic flashlight issued to basic and stealth units. The flashlight is waterproof, non-glare and features 4 different lenses which can be easily installed or removed. It can clip onto the belt or suspender for hands free operation; operates on 2 standard D cell batteries and comes complete with a spare bulb. Brand new, sold in the GI box \$6.50/each; 2 for \$12.25

SHIPPING COST

Please include appropriate shipping costs from chart below with each order. Amounts shown include costs of postage, packaging, insurance and handling.

Orders up to \$10.00	\$3.00
Orders from \$10.01 to 20.00	3.75
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USAF Flight Jacket



These flight jackets are issued to military fliers and are designated Type MA1 for Intermediate Cold (This means that it is the medium weight jacket, designed for comfort in a temperature zone of about 20° to 55° F). Look for the military designation, sizes and stock numbers inside the left pocket. The outer shell and lining are 100% nylon making the jacket completely wind and waterproof. The interlining is 100% polyester fiberfill for the highest degree of warmth per ounce. This jacket is reversible; outside in your choice of either sage green or blue and the inside is survival orange. It features: two hip pockets outside as well as inside, sewn pen and pencil holders plus zippered easy access storage pocket in the left sleeve. This a snappy, convenient, warm, fully functional jacket and it happens to be the latest fashion trend. Specify: Sage Green or Blue Shell - Regular Length Only. Sizes: XS, S, M, L, XL \$46.75/each; XXL \$51.50/each

Brand New! Flight Jackets in Black and Woodland Camouflage - Exact in every detail to the genuine GI MA1 jackets above, manufactured by the same government contractor, to military specs; with reversible orange linings. The Black nylon shelled jackets feature a gold zipper and the Woodland Camo jackets are made from genuine GI cloth of 50% cotton/50% nylon. Sizes: XS, S, M, L, XL \$46.75/each; XXL \$51.50/each

USAF Heavyweight Flight Jacket-Type H28 - This is the warmest flight jacket that the military issues. It features full pile hood which drapes over the shoulders when not needed. This is the cold weather version of the Intermediate Weight Flight Jacket - Type MA1 featured elsewhere in this ad. This jacket is designed for subfreezing temperatures: Waterproof and Windproof. S, M, L \$87.75/each; XL \$95.75

M-65 Field Jackets - This is the basic issue combat jacket. Designed for complete utility, these water repellent and windproof jackets feature: 4 super large utility pockets; gusseted back for complete mobility and freedom of movement; epaulettes; adjustable cuffs and collar; drawstring waistband; hidden hood in collar. Brand new, of course. Sizes are XS, S, M, L, XL. Long lengths are available in Olive Drab (OD) Green and Camouflage, Woodland pattern only. If you're unsure of your size, tell us your chest measurement when ordering. XS-L \$55.00/each; XL & all long lengths \$60.50/each; XL/long \$85.00/each
Choose from: Olive Drab (OD) Green Camouflage, Leaf Pattern Camouflage, Woodland Pattern (latest GI issue to Army), Desert Tan - (NATO issue), Camouflage, Tiger Stripe - (Commercially made in a US mill to military specs)

M-65 liner - Genuine GI - designed to quickly and easily button into M 65 Jacket to provide complete warmth by sealing in the body heat. Brand New. XS, S, M, L, \$19.00/each; XL \$20.50/each

Genuine Military Insignia - meeting all military specs

Special Forces Flashes (choose from: 5th Group in Vietnam; 8th; 12th; or JFK Special Warfare Center) \$1.75/each
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Air Assault Badge \$4.00/each
101st Airborne Crest \$3.00/each
82nd Airborne Crest \$3.00/each
101st Airborne Patch (specify regular or subdued) \$1.75/each
82nd Airborne Patch (specify regular or subdued) \$1.75/each
Ranger or Airborne Tabs (specify regular or subdued) \$1.00/each
Marine Recon Wing - gold plated \$4.50/each
Pilot Wing, USAF - nickel plated \$3.50/each
Full Bird Colonel's Rank - Army - nickel plated \$3.50/pair
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